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Yours sincerely

J. H. McCurry

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J. L. M. CURRY

A Biography

BY

EDWIN ANDERSON ALDERMAN

AND

ARMISTEAD CHURCHILL GORDON

New York

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

LONDON: MACMILLAN & CO., LTD.

1911

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Norwood Press:
Berwick & Smith Co., Norwood, Mass., U.S.A.

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To the Memory of

MARY THOMAS CURRY

A true and tender wife,

whose unfailing sympathy, devoted care,

and understanding mind,

kept young and stout the heart

of this brave

optimist and advocate.

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"Let us live in the Present and for the Future, leaving the dead Past to take care of itself,—drawing only profitable lessons from that and all history."

CURRY TO HIS SON.

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CHRONOLOGY

1823: January 5: William Curry marries Susan Winn.
1825: June 5: Jabez Lamar Monroe Curry born.
1826:
1827: Mother dies.
1828:
1829: September 4: father marries Mrs. Mary Remsen; Jabez starts to school to Mr. Fleming.
1830: To school to Fleming; later, to Vaughn.
1831: Ditto.
1832: Ditto.
1833: At school in Lincolnton.
1834: At Waddell's famous school at Willington, S. C.
1835: At home school, Double Branches; Mr. Finn, teacher.
1836: Ditto.
1837: Ditto. Father visits Alabama and buys Kelly Springs, Talladega Co.
1838: Moves with parents to Alabama; at school again to Mr. Finn.
1839: August: Enters Franklin College, called later University of Georgia.
1840: At College.
1841: Ditto; in print first time.
1842: Junior orator: subject, "Andrew Jackson."
1843: August: Graduates from Franklin College; goes to Harvard; enters Dane Law School, September 13.
1844: Hears Birney, Prentiss, et al., in Faneuil Hall.
1845: Graduates from Dane Law School; enters law office of Samuel F. Rice, at Talladega.
1846: Joins Texas Rangers for Mexican War; admitted to the Bar.

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1847: March 4: Marries Ann Alexander Bowie; elected to Alabama Legislature in August.

1848: Making speeches in Presidential campaign for Cass.

1849: Represents the State as Solicitor in Tallapoosa County.

1850: Turns farmer.

1851: Address on death of Calhoun.

1852: Settles on his farm three miles east of Talladega, where he lived till 1865.

1853: Re-elected to Alabama Legislature.

1854: February 3: Bill for Geological Survey; farming and practicing law.

1855: Elected third time to State Legislature; defeats Know-Nothing candidate; is called the "Ajax Telamon of the Democracy."

1856: Elector on Democratic Presidential Ticket.

1857: December 7: Enters U. S. Congress as a State-Rights Democrat.

1858: February 23: Maiden Speech on Kansas Question; April 27, speech against Pension Bill.

1859: December 10: Speech on Progress of Anti-Slaveryism.

1860: Speech at Talladega on the "Perils and Duty of the South"; Mission to the Governor of Maryland.

1861: January 21: Resigns from Congress with other Alabama Representatives; in Confederate Congress at Montgomery.

1862: In Confederate Congress at Richmond; lectures on "Two Wants of the Confederacy."

1863: Speaker pro tem. in Confederate House; lectures on "Social and Political Quicksands;" defeated in August election; at Chickamauga with the "Home Guards"; an unsuccessful candidate for the Confederate Senate.

1864: Serves final term in Confederate Congress, and writes the Address to the People of the Confederate States; Commissioner under the Habeas

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Corpus Act; Special Aid to Gen. Joe Johnston; Special Aid to Gen. Joe Wheeler; Lt-Colonel, commanding 5th Alabama Regiment.

1865: March 16: Assigned command in North Alabama; April 8, wife dies; May 13, paroled; December 5, accepts presidency of Howard College.

1866: January 28: Ordained to the Gospel Ministry; preaching, teaching, and speaking on Education.

1867: June 25: Marries Mary Wortham Thomas; June 29, sails for Europe; July 10, LL.D. from Mercer; October, appointed Professor in Richmond College; Honorary Member of Phi Sigma Society of University of Mississippi.

1868: April 21: Resigns presidency of Howard College; April 29, leaves Marion for Richmond; May 6, severe injury to Mrs. Curry at Baltimore.

1869: February 6, 7: Lectures at Washington and Lee; August 27, introduced by Barnas Sears to George Peabody, at White Sulphur Springs.

1870: April 20: Address at Brooklyn: "Conditions and Prospects of Education in the South"; June 18, report leading to the Baptist Italian Mission; October 11, first lecture at Richmond College on Constitutional Law; November 2 to 4, has Dr. Sears for his guest; December, addresses Joint Committee of Legislature in behalf of Richmond College.

1871: February 18: Appointed a Visitor to the Medical College of Virginia; D.D. from Rochester University.

1872: Elected a Trustee of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; President of General Baptist Association.

1873: May 29: Address: "Triumphs and Struggles of Virginia Baptists"; October 9, address before the World's Evangelical Alliance, New York City.

1874: Address before the Virginia Agricultural Society;

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Elected President of the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention; spoken of for United States Senator.

1875: January 3: Enters upon temporary pastorate of First Baptist Church, Richmond; March 19, stepmother dies; July 3, sails for Europe for a year's absence.

1876: In Europe first half of the year; presented to Humbert and Christina.

1877: March 2: Political disabilities removed; March 3, offered a place in his Cabinet by President-elect Hayes; March 7, awarded premium on tract: "A Baptist Church Radically Different from Pedo-Baptist Churches"; March 13, visits old home at Talladega; July 31, August 1, visits Dr. Sears at Staunton; October 30–November 1, aids in entertaining President and Cabinet at Richmond.

1878: January 29: Famous speech in Mozart Hall, Richmond, on "Laws and Morals"; many speeches throughout the State on the pending issue of the State Debt.

1879: Other speeches on the State Debt; Professor and Religious and Social leader.

1880: March 23: Offered place as Visitor to West Point; May 5, sails for Europe; September 24, resumes duties at Richmond College; November 2, votes for Gen. Hancock.

1881: January 7: Daughter, Susan Lamar Turpin, dies; February 3, elected Peabody Agent; February 7, resigns professorship at Richmond College; June 23, elected a Trustee of Richmond College; given medal as Professor of Philosophy; October 5, first annual report to Peabody Trustees.

1882: Addresses Legislatures of South Carolina, West Virginia, and Mississippi.

1883: May 8: Lectures on Gladstone at Waco, Texas; May 14, 700 public school pupils call on him at his

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hotel in Fort Worth; May and June, on a 9,000-mile trip to Salt Lake City, San Francisco, Yosemite Valley; December 18, calls on Matthew Arnold in Richmond and hears him lecture; December 19, visits two colored schools with Mr. Arnold.

1884: October 11: At the old home in Lincoln County, Georgia, where he was born.

1885: March 27: Offered head of Bureau of Education; September 23, accepted appointment as Minister to Spain; October 1, resigns presidency of Board of Trustees of Farmville Normal; October 9, calls on J. R. Lowell; November 5, sails for Spain; November 25, reaches Madrid.—Alfonso XII dies at 9 A.M. the same day.

1886: May 17: "Assists" at the birth of the new King.

1887: July 13: LL.D. from the University of Georgia; Armitage's History of the Baptists published, with Introduction by Curry.

1888: April: "The Acquisition of Florida," published in the American Magazine of History; August 6, resigns as Minister; August 20, resignation accepted "with regret"; September 23, lands at New York; October 3, after three years' suspension, re-elected Peabody Agent.

1889: "Constitutional Government in Spain"; "Establishment and Disestablishment."

1890: October 1, 2: Peabody Trustees hold annual Meeting in New York City; October 16, the Currys move to Washington City, and occupy their new home; October 30, chosen Slater Agent.

1891: October 7: Unanimously elected an Honorary Trustee on the Peabody Board; October 8, meeting of Educational Committee of the Slater Fund; publishes volume, "William Ewart Gladstone."

1892: October 17: Arranges for renewing Peabody Normal College Scholarships to Florida and Missis-

sippi. Made a Trustee of Columbian University, Washington. (He held the position till his death.)

1893: April 25: Resigns Farmville Trusteeship; May 19, entertains the Infanta Eulalia et al. at Washington.

1894: October 4: Re-elected General Agent of the Peabody Board; November 21, attends funeral of Robert C. Winthrop; publishes "The Southern States of the American Union."

1895: January 11: Meeting of Slater Trustees in Washington; January 19, sails for Europe; June 1, returns; October 19–28, on Jury of Awards at the Atlanta Exposition.

1896: October 6: Special Committee of Peabody Trustees met to consider the expediency of terminating the Trust in February, 1897—Adverse decision; October 7, Curry re-elected General Agent.

1897: October 10: Attends funeral of Mrs. Mary W. Thomas, mother of Mrs. Curry; December 30, elected second president of the Southern History Association, to succeed Hon. William L. Wilson.

1898: April 21: Address on 30th anniversary of Hampton Institute; July 4, address at the University of Chicago, on the Principles, Acts, and Utterances of John C. Calhoun; publishes "Sketch of George Peabody and a History of the Peabody Education Fund."

1899: June 22: Address before the Education Conference at Capon Springs, West Virginia; December 21, invited to be Editor-in-Chief of a series of 10 historical volumes, to be issued by B. F. Johnson & Company.

1900: June 12: Address at the University of Virginia; June 27, address at Capon Springs; October 9, address at Tulane University.

1901: Publishes a "Civil History of the Government of

the Confederate States, with Some Personal Reminiscences." On June 15, delivers the Centennial Commencement Address at the University of Georgia.

1902: January 27: Elected a member of the Phi Beta Kappa Society of William and Mary; April 7, entitled "Ambassador Extraordinary" to Spain; April 19, sails for Spain; May 13, reaches Madrid; May 15, presents his Address to Alfonso; May 16, is decorated by the Royal Order of Charles III; May 17, attends the Coronation; May 22, leaves Madrid; August 2, lands at New York; October 1, last meeting with the Peabody Board; re-elected General Agent, and $2,000 salary authorized for a Secretary; November 30 to December 2, last visit and address to the Peabody Normal College, at Nashville.

1903: February 12—Thursday: Dies at Fernihurst, Asheville, N. C.; February 15—Sunday: Buried in Hollywood Cemetery, Richmond.

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PREFACE

THE subject of this book left for the writer of his biography "an embarrassment of riches" in the voluminous mass of papers, journals and correspondence that constitute his unpublished literary estate; so that the difficulty of the present authors in dealing with this material has arisen rather in selection and co-ordination than from any other source.

Dr. Curry's mental attitude illustrated a singular and remarkable combination of the vision of the literary man, and the concrete activity of one who does things. Thus it came about that he not only achieved results, but he also found time to record his achievements. That he was accumulating material for the story of his well-spent life is not inconsistent with such a proper sense of modesty, as is rightly adorned by a just self-esteem. Just as it was clear to him at the time he began to keep these records that his life, if it should be spared to him, would be one of unusual opportunity and privilege, so in his later years he was of one mind with his venerable and distinguished associate in the Peabody Trust, Mr. Robert C. Winthrop, that their work in the administration of that trust was a conspicuously great and enduring public service.

He kept seven note-books and scrap-books, apart from the diary which he kept through many years; and in addition to diary and note-books, he preserved four volumes of letters and newspaper clip-

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pings, together with many loose sheets and vagrant scraps of memoranda. His correspondence was extensive, and refutes the popular assertion that letter writing has been long a lost art.

Out of all this mass of documentary resource the writers of this biography have tried to select such material as would, with proper arrangement in the connecting narrative, furnish forth the environment, and illustrate the life and character of the man they sought to portray.

For invaluable assistance in this arduous and difficult task of selection, and in the co-ordination of the material so selected, their thanks are due and are here expressed to Dr. John Walter Wayland of the Woman's Normal School at Harrisonburg, Virginia. His service to the authors was one requiring patient energy and scholarly good sense, and he discharged that service with great accuracy and discretion.

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J. L. M. CURRY

A BIOGRAPHY

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CHAPTER I

"THE DARK CORNER"

THE vehement and freedom-loving personality of John Wilkes so greatly appealed to the patriotic Americans of the Revolutionary struggle that they gave the name of the eccentric Englishman, who had boldly espoused their cause, to three counties in the United States. One of these, Wilkes County, in the northeastern part of the State of Georgia, was subdivided in the year 1796, and one of its subdivisions received the more recently illustrious name of Lincoln, in memory of Benjamin Lincoln, a prominent general of the colonial forces in the war with the mother country.

Along the northeastern border of Lincoln County, and separating the county and state from the visible counties of Edgefield and Abbeville lying to the east of it, flows the Savannah River. Lincolnton, the county seat, lies near the centre of the county, whose southeastern extremity, wedged into the angle formed by the confluent Savannah and Little Rivers, came to be known in the early days of the country as "The Dark Corner."

There is nothing in frontier history more characteristic of the pioneer period than are many of the names, bestowed upon their homes by the incoming settlers. "The Dark Corner" was justified of its title. The Indian was there for a period, with the

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antagonism of the conquered towards the conqueror. In a wild and unsettled country, without laws, or schools, or libraries, each man was a law unto himself. This general spirit of lawlessness, or lack of law, with its attendant characteristic of reliance upon physical strength and personal powers, affected the social existence of the inhabitants of "The Dark Corner" down into the earlier years of the nineteenth century; and in the first two decades of that century Lincoln County may be said to have been lacking both in the sobriety and the peacefulness of its population; while, as is commonly the case, the reputation, once acquired, long survived the facts which created it.

"Georgia Scenes," Judge Longstreet's volume of inimitable humor, written to illustrate and make palpable the earlier years of the nineteenth century in that state, has for its first chapter "The Lincoln Rehearsal," a title suggested in all probability by the county which held "The Dark Corner," where characters abounded like Ransy Sniffle, "whom nothing on earth so much delighted as a fight;" and where far into a higher civilization the conventional question, "a thousand times asked," was, "which is the best man, Billy Stallions (Stallings) or Bob Durham?" and was daily sought to be answered by wager of fistic battle. But, as is generally the case with simple people, free from the restraints of legal or social compulsion, these citizens and denizens of "The Dark Corner" had the virtues that accompany their faults. They were frank and genial in their hospitality, and generous in their dealings with both friend and stranger. Their kinship to nature was close; and, if their passions were elemental,

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their characters took on a certain aspect of nobility in their truthfulness, their generosity, their courage, and their hardihood. The heroic drama of our national expansion was then just getting under way. The conquest of the land of a virgin continent, now ended, was then beginning. This region was the West—a spiritual and idealistic as well as a geographical term, for wherever new peoples, new forces and new ideals are modifying old conditions—that land is the West.

Here, in the very heart of "The Dark Corner"—"right in the center," he writes of it—ere the sunlight of a later civilization had lifted the shadows—was born on Sunday, June 5, 1825, Jabez Lamar Monroe Curry.

Jabez was a name that ought never to have been bestowed, save with a full sense of the responsibility incurred by the giver in its bestowal. It may have been that it was conferred with some subtle and indefinable prescience on the part of the giver that the bearer of it was to witness and to help toward the healings of the distress of his people; for Jabez is, by interpretation of the Hebrew, "sorrow, or trouble;" or else his parents, with some like unconscious anticipation, may have beheld the greatness of their son's future, and named him for him of old, who "was more honourable than his brethren; and his mother called him Jabez;" or, as is more probable, his parents received their chief inspirations and enthusiasms from religion and politics, and poured a rather wholesale broadside of both upon the helpless babe.

Of his entire name, which as originally bestowed was even more than he himself could bear, he writes

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in his "Diary," with a certain feeling that is not altogether destitute of impatience:—

> The Jabez is an honored Bible name, and was borne by Jabez Marshall, a popular Baptist preacher in Georgia; and by Jabez Curry, who died in Perry County, Alabama, in 1873—a favorite nephew of my father. Lafayette was the nation's guest when I was born, and my father, in token of gratitude to the friend of Washington, saddled me with the name; but I threw it aside and substituted Lamar. Monroe was President in 1825; so I had to take that burden also. I know no good from my long name, but not a little inconvenience.

The sympathy of the reader must go out to the writer of the above poignant paragraph; and a lesson to pious or patriotic or thoughtless parents may be found in the reflection that a far more befitting name, for the great educational figure of his time, would have been Lamar Curry.

The early boyhood of Jabez was made familiar with many "Georgia Scenes" surpassing in eccentricity and outlawry even those of which the story-teller has made literature. He was a witness, as he tells us in the desultory pages of a journal which he kept in later years, of many hand-to-hand fights and fierce personal encounters. The spirit of the Revolution continued, long after its close, to dominate the section where he was born, a hill country, into which through the generations had fled those who sought escape from bondage or crime, or who desired a larger freedom of thought and action than prevailed in the more civilized parts of the new Republic; and "Tory" was, even in Curry's boyhood, a term of opprobrium, quiet submission to which carried with it the stigma of cowardice. Out

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of "The Dark Corner," and from other parts of the county, the lad was wont to see gathered at stated intervals its citizen soldiery to the militia musters—a period while they lasted, of unrestrained festivity rather than of military restriction; and thither, too, on important occasions, when a representative in the legislature or in the Federal Congress, or a governor or other high state official was to be chosen, came the freeholders to cast their votes *viva voce* in the presence of the sheriff and the election officers, and to be thanked by the candidate who received them. No less in the infrequent sessions of the courts of that earlier period was illustrated the primitive and natural wildness of country and people. A striking story is told in the autobiography of a prominent man who flourished in an adjoining state, which serves to emphasize the state of society then prevalent throughout that section.

"Pushmatahaw, a Choctaw chief," says the relator, who when a very young man, and a new comer to the county in which the incident occurred, had just been made prosecuting attorney, " had killed one of his subjects. In doing this, he acted under his tribal authority, and was so far justifiable. But under our law, which had been extended over all the territory conveyed by the Indians to the general government, the execution became murder. Pushmatahaw exercised great control and influence over his tribe.

"He had in some way incurred the hatred of the land companies organized to purchase reservations. It was important to them that he should be got out of the way; and to this end they employed a number of able attorneys to aid me in the prosecution. To avoid censure, it was determined that there should be only one speaker.

"The grand jury of Kemper County reported a bill of

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indictment, and all the requisite preliminaries were performed by me preparatory to an early trial. I was notified that Mr. Samuel J. Gholson would aid me in the argument of the case before the jury.

"The defence had secured the services of some of the ablest lawyers in the state from Vicksburg and Jackson. A day for trial had been appointed, and witnesses summoned. I had, soon after my arrival in DeKalb, the county seat of Kemper, been introduced to a young Virginian, who had lately come there to practise law, and who made from the first a marked impression on me. This was Joseph G. Baldwin, afterwards so widely known both as a lawyer and a literary man. Two days before the trial he came to me, and requested to be allowed to take part in the argument, as it might lead to future success if he appeared in a case of so much interest. This I consented to do, and carried my point against great opposition from my colleagues. The testimony was soon ended. All the facts were against the defendant, and the *corpus delicti* was clearly shown. It was necessary to put the defence entirely upon tribal authority.

"The argument was opened for the State by Gholson in a characteristic speech. When Mr. Joe Baldwin arose, he was at first listened to with such slight curiosity and general indifference as might be expected for a very young man, entirely unknown to his audience. In a few moments this was changed to absorbing interest and attention. His speech was marked by the clearest and most convincing logic, rising at times into vivid oratory. It was evident that this modest young man, though yet to fortune and to fame unknown, was destined to take no obscure place in his day and generation.

"Other arguments were made, and the case was submitted to the jury. After short deliberation a verdict of guilty was rendered. The defendant was informed of the result, and that he would be hung. He was shocked at the mode of death, and made pathetic appeals against such an

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indignity, claiming his right to die like a warrior. The court had no power to interfere, and sentence was pronounced according to the prescribed forms of our law. When this was done, Pushmatahaw rose to his full height, and gave vent to a wild war-whoop, so full of rage and despair that it was terrible to hear. As there were many Indians present, there was for a time danger of attempted rescue.

"Application for pardon was made to the governor, and the chief had strong hope that it would be granted. A few days before that appointed for the execution, he was informed that the governor had refused the pardon, and that he must die what he considered the death of a dog. This communication was made to the unhappy chief in cold-blooded and inhuman malice, and the result came near proving fatal. Pushmatahaw broke a bottle which chanced to be in his cell, and with a piece of the glass severed an artery in his left arm. He would have died in a short time from loss of blood, if the sheriff had not made an accidental visit to the prisoner. A pardon was granted and sent to the sheriff by an express, in time to save the life of the Choctaw chief."

"It's a far cry to Lochaw," was the boast of the Scotch Campbell, whose broad lands extended over so large a space of the Highlands. It seems "a farther cry" in point of time from the year 1835, when Jabez Curry was a boy ten years old in "The Dark Corner," and Reuben Davis, later judge of the High Court of Appeals, colonel in the war with Mexico, member of Congress, and Confederate brigadier general, was prosecuting the Indian chief, Pushmatahaw, with the assistance of the beardless Joe Baldwin, later Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of California, who was destined to leave a larger fame than is left by the most eminent lawyers, in his "Flush

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Times" and "Party Leaders,"—down to the first decade in the twentieth century, when Curry represented the government of the United States as its special ambassador at the coronation of the present King of Spain, in the administration of Theodore Roosevelt.

The Currys were of Scotch origin; and in Scotland the name seems to have had the earlier spelling of Currie. In one of the will-books of Lincoln County was recorded on March 2, 1827, the will of Thomas Curry. By this testamentary instrument the maker of it appointed two of his sons, James and William, his executors; and to William he devised the old home-place in "The Dark Corner," whereon was located the family graveyard. William Curry was the father of Jabez; and his mother was Susan Winn, whom William Curry married in Lincoln County on January 5, 1823. These Winns are said to have been of Welsh extraction; and in any event the names both of Currie and Winn indicate a purely British origin, and illustrate in conjunction with the names, still surviving there, of the people of that section, the theory of Prof. Nathaniel S. Shaler, in his "Nature and Man in America," that nowhere in the western world, down to the beginning of the War between the States in 1861, did the unadulterated strain of descent from the Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland so prevail as in a radius of three or four hundred miles of the East Tennessee Mountains. Both of these names are still to be found, as of great antiquity, upon the pages of records that hold the pedigrees of the county families of the United Kingdom. Curry records in one of his note books the fact that a General Winn, after whom Winnsboro,

in South Carolina, was named, was an officer of considerable local distinction in the Revolutionary Army; and that later he was for many years a representative in the United States Congress, where he was a colleague of Mr. Calhoun, and voted for the War of 1812. The Welsh Winns were connected with the French Lamars, and the Scotch Currys with the English Walkers; so that Curry might well say of himself: "I can hardly call myself an Anglo-Saxon, as in my veins flow English blood, Scotch, Welsh, and French." Yet, after all, he was, save for the touch of Gallic infusion, a typical product of the British races, which gave a character and distinctiveness to the earlier colonial settlers of the Atlantic seaboard, that was transmitted untainted to their descendants who later pressed forward into the Southern and Southwestern States. Curry, however, with the real democratic spirit, typical of the men of the Revolutionary period, and of the two generations which succeeded, laid no claim to an aristocratic origin, however much he might have found himself by research entitled to it. It was sufficient to him always to know that he was an American; and his Americanism was consistently of so broad and catholic a type as to include within its comprehension every section and every citizen of his country.

Before Jabez Curry saw the light of day in "The Dark Corner" of Lincoln County, another child had been born to his parents. This was Jackson C. Curry, who was a man of sterling honesty and worth, and who spent his maturer years at Newbern, in North Carolina, where he was a deacon in the Baptist Church. With the courage and the patriotism of

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the youth of his generation, when war reddened the horizon in 1861, Jackson Curry entered the Confederate Army, and died in the service at Demopolis, Alabama, in 1863, having achieved the rank of captain, and leaving to survive him two sons and three daughters.

One of Jabez Curry's earliest recollections, as he records it in his "Journal," was a faint and faded memory of his father's second marriage, which occurred September 4, 1829, when the boy was a little over four years old. His mother and an infant brother had died in 1827. With a wistfulness, that grows into pathos in its conclusion, he wrote of her, fifty years later, this paragraph:—

> Of course I do not remember ever to have seen her. Very many persons have told me that she was exceedingly beautiful. It has been a source of sincerest regret that I was not trained in my youngest years by a loving mother. Delicate and susceptible, my life might have been different; but God knows best. I have a thousand times wished for her likeness; but in her day there were no daguerreotypes or photographs; and few persons had portraits painted.

Though thus lamenting, with the retrospection which took him back to earliest infancy, this deprivation of maternal tenderness and solicitude,—a loss which the most callous heart must of necessity regret,—he has not failed to record the kindliness of his relations with his father's second wife, and his sense of indebtedness to her.

"My stepmother was a real mother to me," he writes, "and loved me as she did her own children. I gladly and gratefully bear this testimony to her faithfulness, kindness and love."

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The second wife of William Curry was Mrs. Mary Remsen, a widow, who was born Murray, and whose father was a Revolutionary soldier. She was a woman of social prominence in her community; and her brother, the Honorable Thomas W. Murray, was a figure of more than local distinction, in whose honor one of the counties of the State was subsequently named. Of her first marriage had been born a son, David H. Remsen, who grew up in the household of William Curry as one of his own family, and was the playmate and associate, while he was treated as the brother, of Jackson and Jabez Curry. Of William Curry's second marriage were born Mark Shipp Curry, Thomas Curry, Walker Curry, and James A. Curry, of the latter of whom Dr. Curry writes in his diary under date of July 3, 1894, "My half-brother, James A. Curry, died in Anniston, Alabama." There seems to be no further record of the subsequent career of Mark Shipp Curry, the eldest of the half-brothers; but Thomas Curry was a soldier of the Confederacy, and became a captain in the Fifty-third Alabama regiment, and Walker Curry achieved eminence as a physician, and was a practitioner of his profession in New York City; while James A. Curry was a prominent man in the development of the mineral resources of Alabama. He was a pioneer in the iron business, and with Samuel Clabaugh in 1863 erected and operated a charcoal furnace in Talladega County. Prior to the breaking out of the War between the States, James A. Curry had been a merchant of large means in the town of Talladega; and he owned the lands on Salt Creek in that county on which his and Clabaugh's charcoal pig-iron furnace was erected, which was

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destroyed by the Federal troops a year or two later.

William Curry, the father, was of the generation which succeeded that of the pioneers in Wilkes and Lincoln Counties; and this second generation inherited the moral fibre of their pioneer progenitors. Though the feud and the foray had not in his time altogether passed away, and the original "character" still lent variety and the not infrequent spice of excitement to the community in which he lived, these men of the Lower South of that period were not always, or even frequently, the whiskey-drinking, swaggering rowdies of revolver and bowie-knife, that caricature and libel have portrayed them.

"It is true," writes a competent chronicler of them and of their times, "that many of them drank hard, swore freely, and were utterly reckless of consequences when their passions were aroused. But it is equally true that the great body of them were sober, industrious men, who met hardships and toil with patient courage, and whose hands were as ready to extend help as they were to resist violence and oppression. They took life jovially, and enjoyed such pleasures as they could come by. Although a God-fearing people,—for infidelity was unknown,—there was nothing straight-laced about their religion. They attended divine worship in a reverent spirit and endeavored to do their duty to God and man, so far as they saw it. Even the strictest of them made no scruple about a social glass, or a lively dance, or a game of cards, or even of an honest hand to hand fight under due provocation."

This naïve depiction of a social existence in which the writer personally figured, continues:—

Their creed was generally simple. A man ought to fear God and mind his business. He should be respectful and courteous to all women; he should love his friends and hate

his enemies. He should eat when he was hungry, drink when he was thirsty, dance when he was merry, vote for the candidate he liked best, and knock down any man who questioned his right to these privileges. He was almost always an ardent politician, and a strong partisan on whichever side he enlisted. But a man would have been held in reprobation who should attempt to serve his party by fraud and corruption. There was no ballot-box stuffing.

If creed and custom were alike primitive, they were nevertheless manly and not insufficient; and their crudity emphasized an integrity that was the backbone of their social life.

Here in Lincoln County, amid such surroundings, and touched by such influences as have been narrated, William Curry lived, and his son Jabez spent his earlier years. History makes mention on its lesser pages of many names of the time and vicinity,—for the most part stout English and Scotch and Welsh names, with a touch of the Gallic. Among the first settlers of the county whose names are thus preserved in the local annals were Thomas Murray, the father of William Curry's second wife, Robert Walton, John Lockhart, B. Lockhart, Thomas Mitchell, Sterne Simmons, J. Stovall, Captain John Lamar, Stephen Handspiker, M. Henley, Robert Fleming, James Wallace and Peter Lamar. The two most prominent men of the county in William Curry's time appear to have been his brother-in-law, Thomas W. Murray, and Judge John M. Dooley, who like Murray also had the honor of having a county of the State named for him.

Of the Lamars, whose patronymic Curry sub-

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stituted for that of La Fayette, which his father had patriotically bestowed upon him, and whose blood mingled with the other strains in his veins, the story of the South contains no little. The two most famous of the name and family, since their Huguenot ancestor first settled in the western world, was Mirabeau B. Lamar, orator, poet, soldier and statesman, compatriot of Sam Houston, Secretary of War of the Republic of Texas, the Commander-in-chief of its armies, its Vice-President, and for three years its President without opposition; and his no less distinguished nephew, Lucius Quintus Curtius Lamar, fitted out like his uncle and like his kinsman, Jabez Curry, with extraordinary names, after the apparent fashion of the times, who as Congressman, author of the Mississippi Ordinance of Secession, Lieutenant Colonel of the Nineteenth Mississippi regiment, Minister to Russia from the Confederate States, Secretary of the Interior and Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, touched nothing that he did not adorn.

The religious influences of the period in Lincoln County emanated from the ministers and members, for the most part, of two denominations,—the Methodists and Baptists,—whose missionaries have been from the earliest times in the rugged forefront of pioneer progress in America. The "hardshell" or primitive Baptist of that period was a mighty force in the development of young communities. Religion and æstheticism had not joined hands in that rough world. The preacher preached a simple, fearful creed, compounded strangely of tenderness and pitilessness, and lived an heroic unselfish life, and his doctrines and practices made such an impres-

sion upon the family of William Curry that all the culture and cosmopolitanism of the widest travel and experience could not wean his distinguished son from the faith of his early years.

When about four years old, Jabez Curry was sent to an "old field school" in "The Dark Corner," where reading, writing and arithmetic were taught by one Joel Fleming, the master. The character and regimen of the homes of the vicinity were more or less primitive and simple. The furniture was plain and serviceable. The floors were generally bare of carpets or coverings. These primitive homes contained a population that has been generally described as having been "raised on pot-liquor, and fortified from early youth on jowl and greens, and buttermilk, and hog-meat smoked to the last turn, to say nothing of cornpone with reasonable gravy." The s c h o o l s, school-houses and schoolmasters matched the homes. The old field school-house, which the little boy attended, was built of logs, with the interstices daubed with clay. It was set in a woods, and was roofed with puncheons. There was but one door; and the shutter of the single unglazed window swung on creaking wooden hinges. The window itself was simply a hole in the wall, opposite the huge fireplace, made by cutting out a section of one of the logs. Alongside this narrow opening was a wide plank, fastened against the wall, which was used by the school-children as a writing desk. The first-formed letters of Jabez Curry, learned in the little log school-house in the Georgia woods, were made with a goose-quill pen, which was the exclusive instrument of writing,—the manufacture of which, no less than its use, was sedulously

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taught by all well-minded teachers in the old field-schools. An accompaniment of the quill-pen was the sand-box, whose contents took the place of the more modern blotting-paper; and often master and pupils manufactured also the ink that they wrote with,—a writing fluid which must have been well-made, for the public records that are its monument are still clear and legible in a new century.

The "old field schools" were co-educational; and boys and girls went to school together. In warm weather, the larger boys were permitted to study their lessons outside the school-house, beneath the trees. There were no long vacations; but when a holiday was desired for any special occasion, the master was not over strenuous in resisting the request of the children. Sometimes a mild compulsion was resorted to by the children, when their holiday petition was rejected, and the master would be "barred out." If the pedagogue resisted and made fight, the youngsters met force with force; and Curry has left among his papers a note in which he relates how, on one occasion, young though he was, he participated in one of these "lock-outs" against Mr. Fleming. The master seems to have been beloved by the children, but as, at the time of this episode, he proved recalcitrant when approached for a holiday, his affectionate pupils proceeded first to bar him out; and later, the larger boys bore the struggling pedagogue to the neighboring creek, and soused him into its shallow depths, while even the little Jabez waded into the stream, and with both small hands flung water on his preceptor, while the big boys held him down. It is recorded that the wise and simple master had taken advantage of the op-

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portunity, generously afforded him, prior to the "ducking," to leave his tobacco-pouch on dry land; and that in recognition of the kindliness of his adversaries in this respect, he took his enforced plunge with serene good humor. The holiday was gained; and the pedagogic function in due season resumed, with no apparent diminution or impairment of the usual discipline, and no intimation of diminished dignity.

It has been correctly said by an intelligent writer on the subject of elementary education at the South during this early period, that:—

> The old academies of the South were many of them excellent schools, and in some respects have not yet been surpassed. The "old field" school was often good; but the whole arrangement was without adequate supervision, was expensive and uncertain, and did not reach many of our people. The percentage of illiteracy was high, and was not decreasing.
>
> In the later 'forties the spirit of the great common school revival, which had been led by Horace Mann, began to influence the South; and in the early 'fifties the messages of the Southern governors contained many eloquent appeals for a state system of schools for all the children, and if war had not intervened, their appeals would have quickly taken form in a progressive system of public education.

Northern teachers were frequent in the Southern States, and especially young college graduates from New England, who migrated to the newly developing section of the country, with the idea of advancing their fortunes, sooner or later, in the professions of law and medicine, or by taking advantage of the many opportunities which the time and locality

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offered. So it happened that young Curry's next teacher was a Mr. Vaughan, from Maine, who seems not to have possessed the equable temper and forgiving spirit of Mr. Fleming. He was a rigorous and severe disciplinarian, but is supposed to have been an excellent instructor.

"In 1833, the stars fell." This date of the great meteoric shower, Curry, who was then in his eighth year, recalled vividly in later life; associating it with what is always an occasion of vast importance in the life of a lad,—his departure from home, to attend school at a distance. He was sent from his father's home, in "The Dark Corner," to Lincolnton, where his grandmother lived; and, boarding with her, was put to school with the Reverend Mr. McKerley, the minister of what was then perhaps the sole Presbyterian church, and with a scant congregation, in the county. Mr. McKerley, if his name counts for aught, was of Galloway Scotch stock; and, after the fashion of Presbyterian ministers of that day no less than of the present, was a scholar. Under him Jabez Curry began the study of Latin,—a language whose acquisition stood him in good subsequent stead in his later career as lawyer, politician, and preacher; and which he doubtless ascertained to be of incalculable value to him in his study of the southern languages of Europe during his distinguished career as diplomat and Ambassador.

At Mr. McKerley's school, his cousin, Lafayette Lamar, was his classmate and most intimate friend; and the cordial and affectionate association between the two young lads, formed at Lincolnton, was continued and cemented in their later association at college.

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During the year young Lamar's sister was married; and Curry records that the rows of iced cakes, set in the sun to dry, ere they should "furnish forth the marriage feast," were more wonderful to his sense of interest and curiosity than had been the falling stars. They were the first iced cakes of his boyish experience. He had attended once before the nuptials of a young woman cousin; but, for some virtue of the bride, or yet other undisclosed reason, there had been no iced cakes set out to harden in the sun; and so he tells that the only thing he remembered in connection with that interesting event was that he sat upon a fence, with some other boys, and while peeling a turnip, cut his hand, making a gash, the scar of which he carried through life.

On a Saturday, during his school days at Lincolnton, in company with young Lamar and a companion named Frayser, he went into the courthouse, and with the reckless daring of youth, drew a series of figures in charcoal on the whitewashed walls of the temple of justice. His uncle, Peter Lamar, happened to come in and catch the boys in their vandal act, and scolded them severely, threatening them with confinement in jail and other condign punishment. The threat was one that suggested humiliation and terror; for Jabez had, on previous occasion, been permitted to see the inside of the county jail at Lincolnton.

Many famous names and incidents center about that old courthouse in Lincolnton. The courthouse of the frontier world, particularly in southern life, was a combination of what the theatre was to the Greeks, the forum to the Romans, the Cathedral to the mediæval world, the piazza or the market place

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to the denizens of sunny lands, and the club to the dwellers in modern cities. It centered in itself and absorbed all secular interests. Excitements and thrills were to be experienced there. Ambitions were born there, ideals formed, and patriotism warmed and directed. Here the great and the near-great passed before the eyes of simple people seeking their confidence and loyalty. The church alone was strong enough to vie with the courthouse in human interest. It was the chief architectural glory of straggling villages, standing generally upon some eminence and dominating a hollow square of lesser structures devoted to trade. It is interesting and significant to note that a more practical and far-seeing generation is now substituting the schoolhouse for the courthouse as the center and pivot of community life. The transfer of interest from the one to the other in the public mind denotes a profound change in the popular conception of the meaning of politics. Politics is now coming to mean a practical program of growth and training, through which the fittest and best of all the young life about can be made ready for leadership. This attitude places the emphasis on the child who may be made great, rather than on the adult claimant of greatness, and marks a distinct advance in social understanding.

Conspicuous among the great figures of young Curry's Temple of Justice was the presiding judge of the circuit of the period of his charcoal sketch, William H. Crawford, later a man of national fame and a candidate for the presidency in 1824; Garnett Andrews, who had a local and state reputation as a lawyer and jurist; Judge Joseph H. Lumpkin, afterwards Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Georgia,

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and in his day one of the most eminent and successful lawyers at the Georgia bar; Andrew Miller, for many years president of the State Senate, a lawyer and politician of distinction; and Robert Toombs, then a young man, and afterwards a figure of conspicuous distinction in the history of the nation.

The next year young Curry was sent to school in Willington, across the Savannah River, in Abbeville County, South Carolina, whither his brother Jackson and David Remsen had preceded him the year before. The school at Willington was famous in its day. Founded in the first decade of the 19th century by the Reverend Moses Waddell, it was among the most noted of the earlier ante-bellum academies; and Waddell himself was in the forefront of the schoolmasters of his generation. It has been said of the school at Willington that "it was in the country, far from town; the life was simple and discipline was strict; the hardest work was required of all students." Among Dr. Waddell's pupils at various times were his famous brother-in-law, John Caldwell Calhoun; George McDuffie, "the orator of Nullification;" Judge Longstreet, of "Georgia Scenes" fame; James Bowie, soldier and adventurer, who invented the deadly knife of the southwestern country that is called after him, and who died with Crockett and Travis and their fellows in the defense of the Alamo; James Lewis Petigru, defender of the Union in the days of South Carolina nullification, attorney general of the state and codifier of its laws; and of a number of others whose names are scarcely less distinguished and well-remembered.

At the time of Curry's attendance on the school at Willington, it was directed and taught by the sons

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of the elder Waddell, James P. and John N. Waddell. There were about a hundred boys, many of whom boarded at private houses in the tiny village, and with the neighboring farmers. Young Curry's host was a Dr. Harris, who gave his company biscuits every Sunday morning, and cornbread in its various shapes on other days and times. The pupils gathered at Willington from many directions in the surrounding districts of Georgia and South Carolina; and among other contemporaries there of the two young Currys were W. W. Boyce, who was later a member of Congress from South Carolina; Gen. Milledge L. Bonham, also a member of Congress, and later Governor of South Carolina; and others of more or less local or sectional distinction.

The Willington Academy, which had been first established by Dr. Waddell at Vienna, in Carolina, a short distance from its subsequent site, has been described by one who was familiar with it, as having become famous all over the South. Says this writer:

> After Dr. Waddell was forced from age and disability, to give up teaching, the school was revived by his sons, James and John Waddell, but under the general supervision of the old schoolmaster. No doubt his sons followed their father's plan of teaching, and as I was, when a boy, long an inmate of Moses Waddell's family, and a pupil at the Willington Academy, it may not be unentertaining to give a short account of the old Willington schoolhouse, as we had it from tradition. The boys boarded at farmhouses in the neighborhood or lived in log huts in the woods near the Academy, furnishing their own supplies. At sunrise Dr. Waddell was wont to wind his horn, which was immediately answered by

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horns in all directions. At an early hour the pupils made their appearance at the log cabin schoolhouse. The Doctor, entering the cabin and depositing his hat, would reappear at the door with this school horn in his hand. He then would call out loud, "What boy feels most flatulent this morning?"

After the horn had been sounded by some lucky youth, the school-boys came in to listen to a short set form of prayer.

After prayers the pupils, each with a chair bearing his name sculped in the back of it, retired to the woods for study, the classes being divided into squads according to individual preference. In the spring and summer months these squads scattered through the oak and hickory woods in quest of shade; but in cold weather the first thing done by them was to kindle log-heap fires. Whosoever imagines that the boys did not study as well as they would have done under the immediate eye of the teacher is mistaken. I have been to many schools conducted according to various systems of education, but nowhere have I seen such assiduity in study, nowhere have I ever witnessed such emulation to excel. It was a classical school. The multiplicity of studies now advertised at fashionable academies was unknown in those early times. The debating club on Friday afternoons was an important institution, and regarded by the teacher as a very necessary part of his scholastic system, for to converse and speak in public were esteemed necessary accomplishments to Southern youths.

Of the famous schoolmaster, whose sons succeeded him in the school where the methods of their father's system were still continued in Curry's day at Willington, Mr. Calhoun long afterwards wrote as follows:—

In that character (as a teacher) he stands almost unrivaled. He may be justly considered as the father of

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classical education in the upper country of South Carolina and Georgia. His excellence in that character depended not so much on extensive or profound learning as a felicitous combination of qualities for the government of boys and communicating to them what he knew. He was particularly successful in exciting emulation amongst them, and in obtaining the good will of all except the worthless. The best evidence of his high qualities as a teacher is his success. Among his pupils are to be found a large portion of the eminent men in this state and Georgia. In this state it is sufficient to name McDuffie, Legaré, Petigru, and my colleague, Butler. To these many others of distinction might be added. His pupils in Georgia who have distinguished themselves are numerous. In the list are to be found the names of William H. Crawford, Longstreet, etc. It is in his character of a teacher, especially, that he will long be remembered as a benefactor of the country.

During the year of Curry's stay at Willington an event of great importance in the eyes of the pupils was the visit to the school of the famous Siamese twins, Chang and Eng, who were then making their first tour in America. He makes record among his memoranda of seeing the twins at Willington. They seemed, he says, to be about seventeen years old; and cheerful and very agile.

"Cherry Hill," the home of George McDuffie, was near the Willington Academy; and was a favorite resort of the boys on Saturdays. McDuffie's distinguished career in the United States House of Representatives ended during the year of Curry's pupilage at Willington; and in the same year he was elected Governor of South Carolina. In 1842 he was chosen to the Senate, and was in the forefront of the forensic and political debates and contests of the period in that body.

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It remains to be added, in connection with Curry's life at Willington, that both the sons of Moses Waddell, James Pleasants Waddell and John Newton Waddell, became eminent in their chosen profession as educators,—the former filling with success and distinction the chairs of Latin and Greek in the University of Georgia, where Curry records of him that he treated his old pupil with a fatherly care and kindness during the latter's career as a student; while John Newton Waddell became professor of Latin and Greek in the University of Mississippi, and later its Chancellor.

During the next succeeding year, and for the two years following, from 1835 to 1838, young Curry and his brothers were kept at home, and attended a school nearby at "Double Branches." The teacher, Daniel W. Finn, was an Irishman, and a graduate of Dublin University, where he had studied for the Roman Catholic priesthood. With such educational opportunities, Mr. Finn had made of himself a most excellent scholar; and he was highly proficient and accomplished, especially in the ancient languages. He was moreover a very popular and successful teacher; and it doubtless goes without saying that Curry, who was fond of books and usually an apt and industrious student, made satisfactory progress under the Irishman in the branches of Latin, Greek, Algebra and Geometry, in all of which the master instructed his pupil.

"Double Branches," in the southern part of Lincoln County, was the site of a Baptist Church; and it is eminently characteristic of what might be called the "cosmopolitan" liberality of thought and breadth of view of the population of the period, had

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they known aught of cities, that they not only sent their children to school to a Roman Catholic, but that they permitted a mulatto preacher to fill occasionally the pulpit of the "Double Branches" Baptist Church. This man's name was Adams; and Curry records of him that he preached to the satisfaction of all, both white and colored, and adds: "For a colored man to preach to white congregations was not an offence."

William Curry at this time was a farmer and country merchant. His store drew custom from a wide circle; and both musters and elections were held in its immediate vicinity. Politics ran high in those days, in Lincoln County as elsewhere; and carried inevitably in their train frequent excitement and ill-feeling. But the Lincoln County folks took their politics, as they did the other happenings of life, with a philosophic good humor which did not suffer the sun to go down on their political wrath; and the asperities of election day generally disappeared in the emulation of the quarter-races, which almost invariably succeeded the polling, the electors riding, in competition, quick heats on the nags that had brought them to the store for the purpose of voting.

In the country sports, common to boys and men, young Jabez Curry took his hearty share. The hunting of the opossum and the 'coon, an immemorial pastime and delight with many generations of Southern boys and their darkey friends and playmates, and embalmed in the melody and pathos of more than one plantation song, was a favorite pursuit with Jabez. "Very often," he says, "have I, with other boys and some of my father's negroes, hunted for half the night. It was a boyish ambition,

too, to be out all night. The skill of the negroes in finding their way in the woods by starlight used to excite my boyish admiration."

It was such association as this with the young people of the slave population that gave their white owners so strong a hold upon the natural affections of the negroes; and no one can fully realize and appreciate the reciprocal feelings of kindliness and regard that held the two races of that period so strongly together, who has never been 'possum or 'coon hunting on a Southern plantation at night, with a company of dusky negro playmates!

Hunting birds, too, in the brush heaps of the "new grounds," where the virgin forests had fallen before the axe, and the logs had been piled up to be removed or burnt, was also an exciting sport, with its accompaniment of flashing pine torches and whistling dogwood branches; but the helplessness of the victims, and their easy capture or destruction when blinded by the torchlight, and stricken down by the switches, gave it a cruel aspect to young Curry, who preferred other and less easy pursuits. A rabbit-hunt was a good thing, for bunny had a chance to get away; and fishing with hook and line in river and creek, or hauling the seine in the mill-ponds, offered many opportunities of enjoyment to the growing lad. "I well remember," he declared in after years, with the vivid recollection in which childhood often preserves its simplest memories—"I well remember the first fish—a little minnow—I ever caught; and Napoleon was not prouder of one of his great victories than I was of my piscatory success."

It is a characteristic of the negro race, familiar to

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those who have associated with them in more than one of the Southern States, that the farther south they live, and the nearer to the equator, the more amenable they appear to the impressions of superstition. Superstitious under the most favorable circumstances, the negro of the far south is voodooistic and "conjur-man" to an extreme degree; and James Whitcomb Riley's lines convey no inapt description of him amid his surroundings:—

Amid lush fens of rice,
I beheld the negro's eyes
Lit with that old superstition time itself cannot disguise;
And I saw the palm-tree nod
Like an oriental god,
And the cotton froth and bubble at the pod.

There were no palm trees nor rice in the part of Georgia where Jabez Curry grew up as a child; but the negro was there with his immemorial self-delusions and gross beliefs. Curry has left a grave record of the evil results which this strange quality of the African mind made upon his own in early childhood—an experience that was common to very many of the sensitive and imaginative white children of the South:—

"The negroes, a superstitious, gullible race," he writes, "used to tell me most marvellous tales about ghosts, witches, hobgoblins, and haunted places; and I had not a shadow of doubt as to the truth of their statement. The result on myself was so painful and mischievous, that I made it an inflexible rule in training my children to deal frankly with them, and under no circumstances to deceive them."

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CHAPTER II

ALABAMA: "HERE WE REST"

In the year 1837, Curry's father visited Alabama, and bought a tract of land in Talladega County, known as Kelly's Springs. It was the period of the "Flush Times of Mississippi and Alabama," whose history has been chronicled with the deft and illuminating pen of Judge Joseph G. Baldwin. In the public estimation, there were great fortunes to be made from the acquisition of lands. "Fiat money" of the irresponsible state banks, and the "shinplaster" currency of a wild economic period in the history of the lower South, abounded everywhere; and speculation was rife. William Curry paid thirty-nine dollars per acre for his Talladega farm; and in spite of the later fading of the "Flush Times" and the collapse of the "boom" in land values, he presumably never had cause to regret his purchase. In December of the same year, or in January of the next, he sent his negroes, in charge of an overseer, to Kelly's Springs, to prepare the ground and put out a crop. He sold the old home place in "The Dark Corner," and in May, 1838, set out with his family for his new home in Alabama. Though thus parting finally with the residence and family graveyard of his people in Lincoln County, which passed thenceforward into the hands of strangers, William Curry

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appears to have retained considerable landed estate in Georgia, for he owned not only a large body of land in Lincoln County, but a number of other tracts and lots in various parts of the state,—illustrating in its acquisition and retention one of the most marked characteristics, as philosophic historians remind us, of the genuine Anglo-Saxon, whether as an individual, or in the aggregate as a race.

The starting to Alabama was delayed by the extreme illness of young Curry's stepmother; and the journey was made by Mrs. Curry in a carriage.

In 1802 Georgia, in emulation of the generous and splendid act of Virginia in ceding to the United States the great Northwest Territory, had ceded to the general government the region which became in 1817 the territory of Alabama, and two years later was admitted into the Union as a state. The act by which this cession was made provided that the terms and conditions of the Ordinance of 1787 governing the Northwest Territory should apply, except the provision in the latter as to slavery. The act of Congress, authorizing the people of Alabama to form a state government, contained like provisions, and specified that the constitution of the new state should be in accordance with the Ordinance save as to the slavery provision. It also contained provision for certain land grants dedicated to education and internal improvements.

It has been said of the Convention which met at Huntsville, on July 5, 1819, and continued in session until August 2, that it was an able body of men, many of whom had gained political experience in the older states; and that "it is possible to trace in the document which they drew up the influence of

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Virginia, Georgia, Tennessee, North and South Carolina ideas; yet the document was not a slavish one. It was a good, practical constitution, and it lasted with several small amendments down to the War of Secession."

Alabama became one of the states of the American Union, December 14, 1819; so that its statehood was but a little more than five years of age at the date of Curry's birth in 1825. When he became its citizen in 1838, both state and boy were young; and thenceforward they grew up and developed together until War arose on the horizon, and a new government claimed and received the allegiance of both.

At the time of William Curry's migration with his family from Lincoln County, Georgia, to Talladega, Alabama, the new state was such a frontier country as the Georgia of a preceding generation had been. The historian, above quoted, says of it:—

> The conquest of nature absorbed the inhabitants of the new state so fully that they had little time for political questions; nor did these for some time press upon them for solution. The new state began its career in the "Era of Good Feeling," under President Monroe. The bitter Missouri contest was contemporaneous with its admission, and during the years of political quiet that followed, Alabama knew no politics. The population was nearly half slave; but the conditions were favorable to slavery, and there was little difference of opinion about it. Laws were passed to regulate the institution, to prevent cruelty on the one hand and wholesale emancipation on the other, to prescribe the status of free negroes, and to maintain order among the slaves and the free. The question then passed into the background, where it slumbered, with one or two brief interruptions, until it was called forth by the great discussions that immediately preceded the War.

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The distance which was traversed by the Curry family in going from "The Dark Corner" to their new home at Kelly's Springs was more than two hundred miles. The way stretched entirely across the State of Georgia and a third of the way across the State of Alabama. It was no slight or trivial journey, for the way was largely unbroken, and the means of locomotion primitive. The cavalcade was composed of the white family in vehicles or on horseback, the carriage in which Mrs. Curry was transported, various wagons and horses, the latter hitched to the vehicles, or ridden under saddle, and numerous negro household servants. A necessary part of its equipment was a sufficient supply of tents, for there was neither inn nor hostelry for the accommodation of man or beast. But the May weather was mild and balmy; and camping-out under a cloudless heaven, beneath the overhanging stars, afforded the lad a new joy, the memory of which lasted through his life. The wolves, attracted by the camp-fires which the servants built at night, approached the camp, and protested against the invasion of their territory with doleful howls; but the fears which they aroused in the minds of the youthful members of the party were accompanied by such a sense of excitement and interest as to make them not unwelcome. At a point where the little cavalcade crossed the Georgia line into what is now Cleburne County, Alabama, young Curry got his first sight of the mountains. Though they were neither lofty nor commanding, they presented to his view a novel and unexperienced landscape; and in traversing them he examined with keen interest the grasses, shrubs and ferns with which they were

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covered. A long familiarity in after years with the mountains of his native country, and with the Pyrenees, the Alps and the Apennines of the old world, never obliterated from his memory that early impression of the low mountains of the Georgian border.

"It was a sad exodus," he wrote, more than half a century later, in allusion to a visit some years before to the old place in Lincoln County, "leaving the old homestead, where grandparents and mother lay buried. Many years afterwards I revisited my birthplace, but what a change! When my father emigrated, he left a mansion, all needful outhouses, a grove of beautiful oaks, a fertilized vegetable garden, a yard glowing with roses and rare flowers, well-bearing orchards of selected fruits, a plantation well-fenced and intersected by roads, and everything that characterized a well-to-do Southern home. · Forty-six years had wrought a marvellous transformation. Nearly everything on the surface had disappeared, except the dwelling-house, and that was in a dilapidated condition. The cultivated fields had been neglected and permitted to grow up in broom sedge and sassafras and persimmon and pine. Desolation reigned supreme. I came away sick at heart, regretting that I had made the visit, for all the cherished pictures of childhood's life were dispelled, and there only remained the saddest impression of what neglect and poverty and bad tillage had wrought."

The new home in Talladega County was reached May 29, 1838, and the new life begun. The negroes, who had come on before the family, had been industriously at work, and had done their work well. The new lands had responded to the efforts of their cultivators; the corn, that had been planted in the early spring, was already waist-high; and nature's

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lavish gifts were everywhere in evidence. The woods were covered with verdant and luxuriant foliage; grapes hung from the branches of trailing vines, and wild flowers blossomed in wood and wold. The water in the streams, flowing amid limestone rocks, was clear as crystal; and the whole new country seemed to the impressionable boy the most beautiful he had ever imagined.

The newcomers found that the dwelling house was not completed. It was a two-story building of ample proportions, yet in its unfinished state it afforded only scanty shelter. But the season was mild, and the tents that had been pitched by the wayside were not without their uses at the goal. The kindly welcome which the negro slaves gave the newcomers made no little amends for many temporary discomforts. They were at work in the fields by the roadside as the cavalcade from Georgia approached; and throwing down their hoes, they rushed to meet their master's family with the joyous and noisy greeting of a careless race.

The nomenclature of places is often as interesting and as significant as that of peoples and individuals; and not infrequently establishes historical landmarks that ought not to be changed or removed. Contact with the Indians, of which the new state had up to very recent times been full, had impressed the incoming white settlers with the frequent appositeness and significance of the Indian names; and many of them were retained for the places and localities to which they had become attached. "Alabama" itself meant "Here we rest;" and was no inappropriate appellation for the new region in the eyes of the incomers. "Talladega" meant "Border Town;" and

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the white settlers retained it. It was a fertile spot, this Talladega Valley, constituting the eastern part of the great Coosa Valley; and a land that lent itself rather to the cultivation of the cereals than of cotton. It had been the country of the Muscogee Indians, later better known as Creeks. The Creek Indians in the War of 1812, as the Five Nations in the North during the Revolution, had espoused the cause of the invading British against the local white man. These Creeks had committed the atrocious massacre at Fort Mims; and it was not until General Andrew Jackson had vanquished them in the battle of the Horseshoe Bend, and finally by treaty restricted them to the Coosa Valley section, that they had been under control. When William Curry's family arrived at Kelly's Springs, in Talladega County, in 1838, the Indians had for the most part passed out of Alabama, Cherokees, Chickasaws and Choctaws going first; and the warlike Creeks only departing at last, after a last stand and struggle at Pea Ridge in the preceding year.

Though most of the Indians had long since departed from Alabama, and had crossed over into the country west of the Mississippi River, a few continued to stay in their old country, earning a precarious subsistence by hunting, fishing and begging. Several of them were at the new home at Kelly's Springs when the Currys arrived; and Curry records of them that they were for a long time thereafter to be seen at the place nearly every day. They were poor and harmless and friendless; and he became quite fond of them, and soon learned to speak their language so as to converse with them in it. But he writes regretfully that their general worthlessness soon dis-

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illusioned him of the romance with which Cooper in his "Leather Stocking Tales" had invested the figure of the red man.

Yet in spite of their later degradation, these Alabama Indians had not been without the marks of a social and economic existence that seemed to lift them above the status of simple barbarism. A recent writer on the iron and coal industries of this section of Alabama says:—

> There is a tradition to the effect that a tribe of Indians called the Ullabees, corrupted by the whites into Hillabees, occupied the mountainous district along Talladega Creek, extending into the present County of Clay, and that these Ullabees had iron arrow heads, and various rude implements made of iron when the first settlers penetrated the wilds, and traded with the Ullabee clan of the Muscogee Indians.

Much of the land in this Creek country belonged to the United States government, and was now put on the market. The Federal Land Office was at Mardisville, near the centre of Talladega County. The several government tracts had been surveyed and laid off into sections of six hundred and forty acres each, and these into subdivisions of forty acres each. This "forty acres" subdivision is supposed to have been the origin of the limitation upon the expectancy of the Southern negro ex-slave in the matter of land in the period immediately succeeding the collapse of the Southern Confederacy. The concomitant mule was a suggestion original to the reconstruction period.

Under the Federal statutes, this public land was subject to entry, with restrictions, on the payment

of a fixed price, at the Mardisville Land Office. The government, however, would accept no money in payment but gold and silver. The paper money of the period was without provision for redemption, and was greatly depreciated. Much extortion was practised by the money changers in the conversion of "shinplasters" into specie, since speculation in lands had become long since in the southwest a species of mania. The strange passion for town-building under conditions known as "boom," which has characterized so many sections and localities of the North American continent at various periods in its history, had twenty years earlier seized upon the then Territory of Alabama.

"Now that the heart of the river basin from the Tennessee Valley to the Florida line was open to white settlement," writes the historian, "immigration came by leaps and bounds. The Whitney gin made cotton-raising the money-making industry, and planters took up much of the Black Belt. Town-making became the rage. Not only was Blakely founded across the delta as a rival to Mobile, and even St. Stephens had neighbors, but Wetumpka, Montgomery, Selma, and Tuscaloosa were laid out, besides others which were to live only on paper. The steamboat had come on the Mississippi. It was clear that in a short time it must solve the transportation question, and make of the river basin an agricultural commonwealth. The old times when the port which looked abroad was the only place of interest, had passed. Local centres were developed over the eastern half of Mississippi territory, and the commerce through Mobile vastly increased.

"The western half, with Mississippi River as its promoter, had increased even more rapidly, and in 1817 was erected into the State of Mississippi. The counties left outside became the territory of Alabama, whose legisla-

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ture met at St. Stephens as the first capitol; but, in two years the sentiment steadily grew that this new territory also was ripe for statehood."

The main public thoroughfare of the county of Talladega passed in front of the door of the Curry homestead at Kelly's Springs, which was situated six miles east of Talladega, and eleven miles northeast of Mardisville. "Every hour in the day and often through the night," writes Curry, "a stream of people would be passing to and from the land office. All traveled on horseback, as the country was new, very sparsely settled, and the roads were few and very bad. Every traveler had his saddlebags for carrying 'the specie' as it was called. Hundreds of these land-buyers stopped with my father. There were no inns or public houses; and unpleasant as it was to entertain them, it was a necessity. The immigration for a few years to this part of Alabama was very large. The settlers were mainly from Tennessee, Georgia and South Carolina, but not a few were from North Carolina and Virginia, with a 'sprinkling' from New England."

The early settlers of Alabama came from many directions. The valley of the Tennessee River, in Northern Alabama, was settled for the most part by Tennesseeans, and through Tennessee, by Virginians. The Georgians came down the Coosa Valley, and back of them the North and South Carolinians filled the central section; while the southern part of the state was populated by settlers from every direction. From the Northern States came several thousand New England business men.

One colony, consisting of French exiles, who had followed the fortunes of Napoleon until his downfall, founded

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on the Tombigbie River, a town which they called Demopolis, in what later became Marengo County.

This heterogeneous people had, as well might be expected, the characteristic virtues and vices of frontier settlers. They exercised a ready and generous hospitality, a neighborly kindness, and an unfailing and invincible self-reliance. They encouraged the propagation of religion; and Baptists, Methodists, Congregationalists and Presbyterians established their churches and flourished in greater or less degree from the beginning of the earlier settlements. The eccentric Lorenzo Dow, whose introduction of camp-meetings into England had resulted in primitive Methodism there, and who is said to have preached to more persons than any man of his time, had been the first minister on the Tombigbie River as far back as 1803. The Alabama settlers brought with them, too, the knowledge and practice of political and civil institutions; but withal, they had the recklessness of the frontiersman, and were quick to resort to weapons to avenge wrong or insult.

A recent historian has declared that

> the Virginians were the least practical of the settlers and the Georgians the most so, while the North Carolinians were a happy medium. The Georgians were noted for their stubborn persistence, and they usually succeeded in whatever they undertook. The Virginians liked a leisurely planter's life with abundant social pleasures. The Tennesseeans and Kentuckians were hardly distinguishable from the Virginians and Carolinians, to whom they were closely related. The northern professional and business men exercised an influence more than commensurate with their numbers, being, in a way, picked men. Neither the Georgians nor the Virginians were

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assertive office-seekers, but the Carolinians liked to hold office, and the politics of the state were moulded by the South Carolinians and Georgians. All were naturally inclined to favor a weak federal administration and a strong state government with much liberty of the individual. The theories of Patrick Henry, Jefferson, and Calhoun, not those of Washington and John Marshall, formed the political creed of the Alabamians.

At the time of William Curry's settlement in Talladega, cotton was the chief agricultural product. The town of Wetumpka, seventy miles to the south on the Coosa River, was the market town for the cotton crops of the section. Wagons drawn by oxen or mules or horses carried down the cotton over rough roads, and fetched back sugar, salt, coffee, iron, rope and bagging, or merchandise for the stores. Curry, as a boy, used to go with his father's wagons occasionally, and would sometimes be thus absent from home for eight or ten days at a time. There was so much hauling over them, that the few roads, poor always at their best, would periodically become almost impassable. Some wag is said to have posted up, in these early days, a bulletin by the side of one of the Alabama quagmire roads, to the following effect:—

> This road is not passable,—
> Not even jackassable.
> So when you travel,
> Take your own gravel.

The cost of transporting the cotton crop to market interfered very largely with the profits of planting. Sometimes boats were built, and, loaded with cotton, were floated down the rivers in the freshets, as loggers in a lumber country float their logs down stream.

William Curry continued to conduct in Alabama, as he had done in Georgia, a country store as an adjunct to the raising of crops on the plantation. In a country where the monetary circulating medium, poor and depreciated as it was, was insufficient in quantity, business was conducted largely upon ledger credits. The country storekeeper sold his neighbors and customers the supplies of various kinds which his wagons brought up from Wetumpka over the bottomless roads, and "charged" them in personal accounts upon his books. As an inevitable consequence many of these accounts were never paid; and William Curry's indulgence of his debtors, during a long period of conducting the business of a country merchant, resulted in the loss to him of many thousands of dollars.

As was frequently the case, the United States Post-office was located at the country store; and young Jabez assisted his father, who was postmaster at Kelly's Springs, in handling the mails, and in conducting the business of the office with the Department at Washington. The day of uniform postal rates and postage stamps had not yet arrived. Envelopes were little known. The writer of a letter was taught, when a pupil at the "old field school," the art of folding and sealing it so as to leave proper outside space for the address, with the same assiduity as that with which he was instructed in the art of making the quill pen with which the epistle was indited. The introduction of the now universally used envelope, with its accompanying mucilage, made adhesive by the moisture of the tongue, was greatly deprecated by the letter writers of this earlier period; and it is recorded of John Randolph

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of Roanoke that, upon the receipt of a letter in such a covering, he inveighed bitterly against his correspondent for "sending him his spittle." The period of the post-office in the country store at Kelly's Springs "was," writes Curry in later years, "before the days of penny postage, and letters were charged six and a quarter, twelve and a half, eighteen and three quarters, twenty-five, and thirty-seven and a half cents, according to weight or distance carried. Prepayment was not compulsory."

Preachers in Talladega in those days, records Curry, "were not too numerous." There were only three Presbyterian ministers in the county. These were Messrs. Cater, Chapman, and McAlpine, names unknown to fame, but all doubtless faithful servants and laborers in a vineyard where the harvest must have offered abundant opportunity of service and accomplishment.

"Baptists and Methodists," says Curry, "as they usually do, performed all the pioneer missionary work. I recall such Baptist ministers as Chilton, Henderson, Welch, Taliaferro, McCain, Archer, Pace, Collins, Wood. Camp-meetings were held every year."

Mr. Finn, the Irish teacher at "Double Branches," back in Georgia, had been invited by the elder Curry to adventure his fortunes in the new country; and the invitation had been eagerly accepted by the sprightly schoolmaster. Finn doubtless accompanied the family in their migration across country; for it appears that on the day following the arrival of the Currys at Kelly's Springs, the business of educating the younger members of the family was promptly taken up. Mr. Finn opened his school,

and the children renewed their studies, their number being gradually augmented by the advent of the children of the nearest neighbors. Jabez continued his lessons in Latin, Greek, Algebra, and Geometry; and stood well in his classes.

"The school was mixed," he writes, "composed of boys and girls. All the schools I ever attended, except the one at Willington, South Carolina, were such; and I here desire to record my decided opinion and my emphatic testimony in favor of the co-education of the sexes."

This outspoken opinion of Curry's was written in the early part of the year 1876, after long consideration and mature conclusion, in a life of which the subject of education had even then filled no insignificant part; and he never wavered in his faith. His "Diary" for 1889 shows him still the champion of co-education in the discussion among the Trustees of the college in Virginia, of which he was one, in the fall and winter of that year. It was a cause whose advocacy was not always popular in southern communities; but it was characteristic of the man's courage, and of his fidelity to ideals once deliberately established, that he was always outspoken in its maintenance.

Although, as has been heretofore stated, the population of the young state was perhaps too raw, and at all events too busy to care very much about politics, there were offices to be filled and officials to be voted for; and in 1838 and 1839 young Curry heard for the first time the voice of the political candidate, literally, "upon the stump;" for the origin of the American phrase, synonymous with the more formal and dignified but no less expressive

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English term, "on the hustings," arose from the custom of the frontier politician and orator addressing his audience from the convenient altitude of the new-made stump, from which had just been felled the majestic body of some great forest tree.

"Harvey W. Ellis and George W. Crabb were candidates for Congress," Curry writes, in recalling the occasion. Crabb was elected as a Whig, "and I remember that in alluding to the subject of slavery, the candidates did so with bated breath." Mere human prescience could not well imagine an economic order surviving under different labor conditions, with the blacks free and unhindered to do as they would; but the burden of ownership of human beings somehow rested on the spirit of a society naturally very kindly and devoted to freedom. It is a very dull intelligence that does not perceive the *impasse* into which these men had been led by the commercialism and the compromises of other generations. No wonder the subject was mentioned with bated breath, for tragedy or ruin seemed to guard every gateway of solution; and they felt the tenseness of the situation in their nerves if they did not dare to utter it with their tongues.

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CHAPTER III

ATHENIAN DAYS

One of the earliest acts of the legislature of the new State of Alabama was to establish, on December 18, 1820, a State University. The act of establishment donated to the purposes of the University forty-six thousand acres of land, which had been appropriated to educational purposes in the Federal statute establishing the new government; and Tuscaloosa having been selected as the site of the University in 1827, work was commenced upon the buildings, and the institution was opened for the admission of students in 1831.

It might naturally be supposed that William Curry would have sent his sons for a college education to the University of his adopted State; but, though no college-bred man himself, his intellectual associations had in a certain sense been with the leading educational institution of the State of his old home. He had known many of its graduates; and his predilections were all in favor of Franklin College, at Athens, Georgia. Thus it was that in August, 1839, Jabez Curry, together with his brother Jackson and their stepbrother, David H. Remsen, entered Franklin College, an institution which had had its origins in 1785 in a State charter, appropriating certain lands, and authorizing a University, which was located at Athens in 1801 as "Franklin

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College"; and which grew later into the present University of Georgia.

Of the reasons why this particular institution was chosen for him, and of his matriculation there, Curry, writing in after years, suggests the following:—

It would have been much better for me to have gone to the University of Alabama; but the institution had had troubles, and my father cherished an attachment for his native state. David and Jackson entered the Sophomore class. I, because of my insufficient age, was put into the Freshman class, and very properly; although on my examination I was declared capable of entering a higher class. A great mistake had been made in my previous education. Instead of studying English branches, and learning Grammar, Arithmetic and Geography, I was at an early age put to learning Latin and Greek, to the neglect of more important and elementary studies.

The journey of the boys from Kelly's Springs to Athens was made in a carriage, and occupied five days. The route, which was followed thereafter in later trips from college, home, and back again, traversed the spot where has since grown up the great and prosperous city of Atlanta.

"When I first passed there," says Curry, "there was not a house, or the hope of a village. As the meeting-point of the Georgia and Western Atlantic Railways, the town had its origin in 1841, and was called Marthasville, after a daughter of Wilson Lumpkin, the Governor. . . . As I passed to and fro . . . the city sprang up as by magic. During the War, while a soldier, I was encamped where I had several times traveled when a college boy. I have been familiar, in peace and in war, with its rapid growth."

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His room at the University was No. 23 in the new college,—a fact as worthy of commemoration on the part of those who value and appreciate his great services in the cause of Southern education, as is the similar record by literature-lovers of the tiny college-dwelling-place of a great American poet, in the University of Virginia, that is lettered in bronze over the door: "*Parva domus magni poetae.*" Here, in No. 23, Curry lived and studied during three of his four formative years at Athens. Together with David Remsen, and his brother Jackson, he joined the Phi Kappa Debating Society. There was another college society for the cultivation of debate among the students; but the lads, with patriotic zeal, chose the Phi Kappa, because it had been and was the custom of most of the students from Alabama to belong to it. He records "a noble rivalry" between that society and the Demosthenean. "They met," he writes, "in their respective halls on Saturday mornings, and kept their proceedings entirely secret. The debates were conducted with much spirit. Through my college course I gave much attention to my debating society; and whatever success I have achieved as a speaker is very largely attributable to my training in this school." It is singular how the rise of new interests in a more complex day and especially the exaltation of athletic exercises have caused the forensic habit to languish and dwindle.

There can be little doubt that Curry's facility of expression as a speaker, and the power which he illustrated at an early date in his public career of holding the attention of his audiences, came from the admirable and diligent practice of the arts of the speaker in the debating society at Athens. He

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writes at a later date than that of the foregoing extract from his journal a reiterated expression of his belief in the great benefit which he derived from this part of his college education.

Every student was a member of one or the other of these organizations. The competition, the rivalry, was strong but gentlemanly. Each met every Saturday morning, and questions previously selected were debated with ardor and profit, sometimes into the night. I must bear emphatic testimony to the value of these exercises upon my subsequent career. The first Greek letter society was organized while I was a student; but I must question whether these select clubs have not had a harmful influence upon the more useful literary societies.

It is interesting to observe the curriculum and methods at that time prevailing at Franklin College.

"The curriculum," he writes, "was of the old-fashioned kind; Latin, Greek and Mathematics predominating, with very little science; and the teaching was chiefly of the text-book order. Prof. C. F. McCoy, one of the best teachers I ever knew, 'kicked out of the traces,' and strove with some success to make his department of Mathematics and Mechanical Philosophy to conform to what is now universally accepted as a necessity of liberal education. English was ignored. Such text-books as Day's Mathematics, Comstock's Geology, Say's Political Economy, Hedge's Logic, Upham's Mental Science, and Paley's Moral Philosophy were used. McCoy published for his class a Calculus of his own; and a published lecture on 'Matter' created a local sensation, being regarded for its exposition of 'potency' as a long stride towards materialism. Looking back from present surroundings and the great progress of college education and all teaching (circa 1901) I am constrained to say, with undiminished loyalty for my Alma Mater, that, McCoy excepted, the President and Profes-

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sors in teaching power were not up to modern standards. Nevertheless, the institution was of a solid character, the relation between Faculty and students was most pleasant, and the four years at college were among the most pleasant and profitable of a long life."

A striking feature of Curry's various written memoranda is his insistence on the value of instruction in English, whether in the elementary and secondary schools or in the college curriculum. To this theory of his he gave vigorous and successful practical form in his early teaching days in Richmond. "Dr. J. L. M. Curry, later Minister to Spain," writes Dr. John Bell Henneman of him in a paper on "English Studies in the South," published after Curry's death, "patron of letters, and lifelong devotee of educational interests, opened a course in English at Richmond College almost before the smoke of battle about the Confederate capitol had fairly cleared away." About the same time Prof. Thomas R. Price inaugurated a similar work at Randolph-Macon College; and Dr. Noah K. Davis had established a chair of English at Bethel, Kentucky, some months before that at Richmond. To all three of these pioneers in one of the greatest fields of college and university work, be accorded praise and credit.

This work of English development in the southern colleges, in the period immediately succeeding the War between the States, was a notable one; and the names of many other English teachers in the South are worthy of being placed alongside those of Curry, Price and Davis. But, after all is said, the distinction of having been the real pioneer in historical English work, not only in the southern colleges, but

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throughout America, belongs to the many-sided genius of Thomas Jefferson.

"He acquired," says Dr. Henneman, "as a law-student, an enthusiasm for the study of Anglo-Saxon, and continued its advocacy as a definite part of the college curriculum, from 1779, when he was a member of the board for William and Mary, until 1825, when the wishes of a lifetime were at last realized by the opening of his pet creation, the University of Virginia. Jefferson had actually written out, seven years before, what is now a curious synopsis of an Anglo-Saxon grammar with specimen extracts for his new institution; and this was the first formal incorporation of a course in historical English in an American University, however meagre and defective a course of one or two hours a week in itself was."

Other influences than those of the curriculum and of books were making their educative effect felt upon the young college student at Athens in these significant years. Lafayette Lamar, his cousin, a youth of early poetic promise, cut down by death before fruition when a soldier in the first year of the War between the States, entered college the same day with him; and during their college career they were classmates and warm friends.

"Among my fellow-students," he wrote, after the lapse of sixty years, "I recall James D. Pope, now Professor of Law in South Carolina College; William Williams, Professor in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; T. R. R. Cobb, killed at Fredericksburg, the most talented young man I ever knew; Sam Hall, Judge of the Supreme Court; Ben Hill, distinguished as lawyer, statesman and orator; Judges Pottle and Bartlett; Felton, Representative in Congress; Joseph LeConte, Linton H. Stephens, and others well-known at the bar, in the pulpit and legisla-

tive councils. . . . LeConte became the most distinguished of all my fellow collegians as an author and a scientist."

Of Benjamin Harvey Hill, orator and statesman, whose political career is comparatively recent, it is scarcely more than necessary to mention here the facts that he served in the Senate of the Confederate States, and after the War was a Congressman and Senator from Georgia; and that he was one of the most conspicuous of American orators and patriots.

Long after their boyish association at Athens, Curry wrote to his old college-mate, LeConte, then at the University of California, a letter to which the following is the reply. The postscript of this communication possesses a peculiar interest, in view of the tremendous and fateful experience of San Francisco and other California cities, some twenty years later.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,
BERKELEY, California, May 30, 1887.

REV. J. L. M. CURRY,

My dear Sir:—Your letter received this morning was a great surprise and pleasure to me. I, too, have followed your career and rejoice in your success. I remember with pleasure Jabe Curry, the most boyish and yet one of the brightest of my college-mates. I remember the very active part you always took in the debates of the Phi Kappa Society, and how I envied your readiness, so strangely contrasted with my own painful shyness. I have, of course, gotten over this in a great measure;—only enough remains to make me always careful to make thorough preparation for even class lectures,—much more, public lectures.

My life has indeed been a happy one in all its relations. I have enough to satisfy my simple wants. My activity is in a field which is in the highest degree pleasant, and which

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does not pall on the taste. My domestic life has been full of love to wife and children and grandchildren. I have had much to be thankful for, and I hope I am thankful.

If you have followed my writings, especially in the *Princeton Review*, you are doubtless aware of my position on the great questions of "Evolution and its relation to religious thought." I really feel very deeply on this subject. I herewith send you a little pamphlet on the subject. Perhaps most of it you have seen before, but not all. You must not draw any inference from the fact that it was published by Unitarians. I am still a Presbyterian, but I do a good deal of independent thinking of my own. I am aware that some will think that my views tend toward Pantheism; but I had no time to answer this implication. I have just written a small book on this subject. It will try to answer briefly three questions—1. What is Evolution? 2. What are the evidences of its truth? 3. What effect will it have on traditional views, and on religious thought generally? In this book I will answer the Pantheistic objection. I hope Appleton will bring it out in the autumn.

I shall be glad, very glad, to hear from you again, and to hear more about your personal concerns. For I would gladly revive my interest in one whom I admired even as a boy.

Very sincerely yours,

JOSEPH LECONTE.

P. S.—We have just received two or three first class seismographs. Wanted, an earthquake to record. They are rather scarce about here just now. If you have any to spare, send them on.

JOS. LECONTE.

Curry was in Spain when he received this letter; and LeConte did not live to see the great Californian earthquake, which equalled many of the most terrible

that have occurred in the history of the Spanish Peninsula. LeConte, who was born in Liberty County, Georgia, in 1823, died in the Yosemite Valley in 1901, nearly two years before the death of Curry. He was one of the greatest of American scientists; and while his foremost work was in the field of geology, he did much to popularize science by his contributions to the literature of many of its branches. He was a teacher and professor successively in Oglethorpe College; in his alma mater, Franklin College, where he and Curry had been classmates; in South Carolina College; and in the University of California, where he occupied the chair of geology, botany and natural history from its establishment in 1869, to the date of his death.

Linton Stephens, who became a prominent lawyer and judge in Georgia, was another of Curry's collegemates at Athens. He had been left an orphan at the age of three; and it was at the cost and expense of his brother, Alexander H. Stephens, that Linton pursued his studies at Athens. After graduating, he studied law at Harvard and in the University of Virginia, and achieved distinction as a judge of the Supreme Court of the State. He also served as a colonel in the Confederate army, and died at Sparta, Georgia, in 1872. His famous brother, Alexander H. Stephens, later the Vice-President of the Confederate States, and one of the ablest vindicators of that ill-starred government in his history entitled "The War between the States," used to come occasionally to Athens to see his younger brother and protégé, Linton; and it was on the occasion of one of these visits that Curry first met him and made his acquaintance. He had then been a practising law-

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yer only about four years; but was already on the high-tide of a great law practice. In 1834, he had been admitted to the bar of his native State of Georgia. It is said that in the first year of his practice he lived on six dollars a week, and made four hundred dollars from his cases that year. It was not long, however, before he owned the old family homestead at Crawfordsville, and had purchased the estate which afterwards became widely known in his possession as "Liberty Hall." Curry describes him at this period, as "a small, tallow-faced, effeminate-looking man, apparently near the grave." It was a physical appearance that characterized him to the end. The body was frail and weak, but the spirit that it encased was quenchless, while life lasted. This mighty and commanding spirit was illustrated in 1848 in a personal collision which he had at Greensboro with Judge Cone, growing out of a political discussion of the Clayton compromise measure of that year. Cone cut Stephens dangerously and desperately with a knife, saying: "Now, damn you, retract, or I'll cut your throat!" Covered with blood, and terribly wounded, Stephens answered: "Never! cut!" grasping as he spoke the keen blade of Cone's knife with a right hand that was thenceforward maimed for life. He lived to a green old age, serving his country with conspicuous ability, and unexcelled patriotism; and until the day of his death was Curry's sincere and faithful friend.

Other interesting acquaintances and friends that he made during the period of his life at Athens were the political orators who came thither in the Presidential campaign of 1840, between Martin Van

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Buren and William Henry Harrison, to speak at the Saturday evening meetings which were held in the town hall at Athens. Among these he makes mention of William L. Mitchell, Hopkins Halsey, Junius Hillyer, Howell Cobb, Henry R. Jackson, and Judge Charles Dougherty.

"I heard a speech," Curry writes, "impassioned and violent, from Mr. Jackson, and Judge Dougherty pounded him into mince-meat. Mr. Jackson was afterwards *chargé-d'affaires* at Vienna, a judge in Georgia, and a general in the Confederate army. My father being a democrat, I became one also, and began this year to read the newspapers."

Jackson's fame rests not solely upon his career as politician, judge and soldier. He was a poet of unusual distinction and literary charm, and has left behind him in "the written word that remains," a more enduring claim upon posterity than in any other of his accomplishments. One of his most beautiful lyrics, that has been not infrequently attributed by ill-informed newspaper writers to "Stonewall" Jackson, whose knowledge or appreciation of poetry was probably infinitesimal, is that entitled "My Wife and Child," written when he was commanding the "Irish Jasper Greens," in the only regiment that went to the War with Mexico from Georgia:—

The tattoo beats; the lights are gone;
The camp around in slumber lies;
The night with solemn pace moves on;
The shadows thicken o'er the skies,
But sleep my weary eyes hath flown,
And sad, uneasy thoughts arise.

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About this time Curry first enjoyed the pleasure of seeing himself in print. He makes record of the fact that in December, 1841, doubtless inspired with his perusal of the journals so recently begun to be read by him, he contributed some slight anonymous communication to one of the papers, which was duly published.

"When it appeared in print," he records, with charming naïvete, "I was as proud as Byron was when he awoke and found himself famous. I read the article over and over many times, and could hardly restrain my boisterous exultation. I never had been as happy. What the thing was about I don't know; but all subsequent successes have never half so elated me."

There were other experiences of these college days which kept them from being monotonous, and left their vivid images upon the plastic mind of the young student. Politics and political events were beginning to assume definite shape in his thought; and recurring to the period after a lapse of thirty-five years, he writes about Whiggery and Democracy:

General Harrison died a month after his inauguration, and Vice-president Tyler succeeded him. Mr. Clay, the great and arbitrary leader of the Whig party, tried to carry out his policy of a National Bank, a Protective Tariff, Distribution of the Proceeds of the Public Lands, &c. Congress twice passed bills establishing a Bank, and President Tyler twice vetoed them. During study hours I went to the Post-office, and learned that Tyler had sent in a second veto. As I passed through the campus, I hurrahed for Tyler; and Dr. Hall, one of the Professors, saw and heard me, and fined me one dollar. I thought then he did it because he was a Whig, and was mortified at what Tyler had done; but I see now he was clearly right.

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Age brings with it conservatism and charity; and Curry's final conclusion as to the real reason of this fine does credit to his sense of kindliness. But the politics of the period were bitter, and the Whigs' wrath at what they were pleased to call the tergiversation of Tyler was very great. For a student to hurrah for any one during study hours upon the campus was very culpable. That he should hurrah for Tyler in the sight and hearing of a Whig professor was likewise very reprehensible. After the lapse of time, and upon consideration of the immutability of human nature throughout the years, who shall say what it was that really produced the atoning dollar from the pocket of the offending young collegian?

At this period of his life, too, began his acquaintance with the gentler sex. Let him narrate it:—

During the three years I had been in college, I had never visited a lady. I was the least boy in the College, hardly weighing one hundred pounds, and I was excessively modest and timid. I was "afraid" of female society. I had had no sisters, grew up unfortunately among boys, and lacked that ease and freedom and self-poise of manner and ability to converse on ordinary topics, which are such a necessary part of a boy's education. My own painful embarrassment, which has never left me, taught me a lesson; and now I urge young men, for many reasons, to visit the opposite sex. My cousin, Lafayette Lamar, and a classmate, Thomas W. White, later a prominent lawyer in Mississippi, begged me to accompany them in some of their visits. I resolved to go, and for days before the time arrived I thought about it, and it weighed on me like a nightmare. It seems ludicrous now to recall my feelings; but I have since gone into battle with far less tremor and agitation than I experienced in anticipation of a visit.

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The President of the College, Dr. Alonzo Church, had some beautiful and accomplished daughters, who were great favorites. I knew them very well by sight,—saw them nearly every day,—and determined to begin with them. The appointed night came. Urging my cousin not to stay to a late hour, and to help me in the event of my failing in conversation, I "crossed the Rubicon." The ladies, quite skilled in drawing out young men, with a kindness which I gratefully record now, so helped me that an hour passed very agreeably, and I have never been called upon to pass through just such an ordeal since.

The Rubicon once crossed, the ladies of the college town came to have the pleasure of his company not infrequently; and in consequence he was able to testify afterwards that "the last six months of my college life were by far the most pleasant of my whole four years."

In August, 1842, Jackson Curry graduated from the college. Usually at commencement there were two days for original speeches, one for juniors rising senior, and one for the honor graduates. Eight or ten of the juniors who had the best standing in their classes were elected by the Faculty as junior orators. On this occasion Jabez Curry was one of the chosen number, and delivered a highly eulogistic address on Andrew Jackson. When he returned to college after the next winter vacation, which lasted from November 1st to January 15th, he took lodgings outside the college, in town, so as to live more comfortably, and at the same time to have a more complete control of his time. From this period, until the close of his college career at Athens, his industry and application were very great. He studied with much persistence and purpose, and averaged from twelve to

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fourteen hours a day at his work. In consequence of a deficiency in mathematics, he was fearful of not being able to graduate, and it was to this branch of learning that he especially applied himself during these last college months. He was consumed with the almost morbid feeling that to fail of graduation after having filled the distinguished position of junior orator involved a deep and abiding disgrace. But, happily, the conclusion of the final examinations demonstrated him to be abreast of the requirements; and he received his diploma as a graduate in August, 1843. In the classics he had approved himself among the first. In political economy, mental philosophy, and other subjects which do not involve a serious knowledge of mathematics, he had experienced no difficulty. By intense application and judicious cultivation, he had acquired a tenacious memory, which enabled him upon occasion to recite as many as from ten to fifteen pages of a book verbatim. This capacity is not infrequently an accompaniment of the linguistic talent; but it was not in that direction alone that he prevailed, for he learned his mathematics as those do not learn it who rely solely on memory.

In the distribution of academic honors at the conclusion of his four years' term, the four leading distinctions fell, in order, to Linton Stephens, Thomas White, Jabez Curry and Lafayette Lamar. Their bestowal reversed the trite and long-standing aphorism that a boy's college-career may not be taken as a prognostic of what he will do later in life. All of these four young men, save one who died with the pathetic promise of youth unfulfilled, became distinguished men. The college lad who succeeds in

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later years may sometimes fail of his college honors; but the exception proves the rule that, in some one way or other, he has made and left his mark upon the student-body, or upon the college life.

Jabez was again elected orator. He chose for his theme, the thought which very often gets close to the consciousness of the boy who stands, at his graduation, face to face with life's opening career; and is illustrated in Byron's lines, which prefaced young Curry's final oration:

> No more, no more, oh, never more on me,
> The freshness of the heart shall fall like dew.

"I do not remember a word of the speech," he wrote in 1876. "In delivering it, I was applauded, while speaking and at the close. The former applause was exceptional."

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CHAPTER IV

HARVARD AND NEW ENGLAND INFLUENCES

WITH his graduation from college Curry faced the momentous question of what path he should next pursue. Upon his return home, the problem was discussed, during the month succeeding his departure from Athens, by his family and friends in Talladega, and was thoughtfully pondered and considered by himself.

"My father proposed to send me to Germany to continue my collegiate studies," he wrote many years later, "but, in my unwisdom, I yielded to the persuasions of relatives, and went in September, 1843, to Cambridge, Massachusetts, and entered the Dane Law School of Harvard College."

His father's proposition to send him to Germany indicated not only the broad view of life which the country planter and storekeeper entertained, and his unerring recognition of his son's unusual talents, but proves no less that planting and store-keeping had been profitable employments in William Curry's case; for in those days to educate a son in Europe was no insignificant tax upon the financial means of Southern Americans. The University of Virginia had been in successful operation for eighteen years, and thither Curry's fellow-graduate, Linton Stephens, went to pursue his studies; but many people

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regarded the discipline of the "honor system" at Charlottesville as too lax for young men; and the stream of Southern youths in the direction of Harvard and Yale and Princeton, that had antedated the opening of Jefferson's seminary of learning, continued to flow North, in spite of political rancor and the fiery gospel of anti-slavery, up to the very outbreak of the War between the States.

Young Curry begun his journey northward in September of the year of his graduation from Athens. It was a memorable, and in many respects, a liberalizing journey. He went by private conveyance from his father's house, over the familiar route to Athens; and thence proceeded by rail to Augusta. It was with no light heart that he undertook and pursued his way northward. "I had no experience as a traveller," he writes, "and in those days travelling was not as easy and common as now."

It was still a period of stage coaches, and corduroy roads, and primitive wayside inns, with now and then a typical specimen of the early "snakehead railroad." Curry has left an entertaining account of these means and methods of the locomotion of that day, in an article written by him in 1901, and published by the Southern History Association, under the title of "The South in Olden Times."

In my boyish days, railways were few and short. In Alabama, in 1843, there were only two, one around Muscle Shoals, and the other between Montgomery and Franklin; and it was put down on string-pieces with flat iron bars, which torn up by wheels occasionally projected into the cars, impaling passengers on what were termed "snakeheads." In 1843, *en route* to Harvard, I travelled from Augusta to Charleston by rail, built nearly all the way on

trestle-work, and by steamer from Charleston to Wilmington. Much travel in those days was on horseback, or in hacks, or picturesque stage-coaches, which signalled their arrival in towns and villages, and notified the taverns of the number of their passengers by long tin horns, or by making more ambitious music on bugles. The stage-drivers knew every body on the road, carried packages and messages, and were sometimes the confidants of country lasses and bashful beaux. The bonifaces are often drawn in character-sketches; but the stage-driver of the olden time, a typical class, has escaped portraiture by pen and pencil. Romances of the road are unused material.

He stopped on his way North for a few hours in Augusta, Georgia, where he had once visited before he left Lincoln County.

"Being a mere lad," he records of this visit, "I remembered only two things,—a big candy store, and a steamboat that plied on the Savannah River between Augusta and Savannah. From Augusta I had to go to Charleston. The railroad was built entirely on trestle work, and not by excavation and embankment, as now. At Aiken, a little town which has since become noted as a resort for invalids, there was an inclined plane; and an engine, going down a parallel track, by means of very large ropes drew the train to the summit of the hill. The country west of Charleston was dreary enough. The swamps and cypress-trees and alligators were quite novel. At Charleston I took a steamboat for Wilmington, reaching there just at sunrise. I was not seasick. Before the lines of railroad were completed, all the travel from Alabama and Georgia to the North had to be done on this route between the cities by water. I travelled by rail from Wilmington to Weldon, and thence to Portsmouth in Virginia. The long white pines in North Carolina, and the tar, pitch and turpentine, made an impression on me. From Portsmouth I was

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carried up the Chesapeake Bay by steamer to Baltimore, thence by rail to New York, stopping at a hotel on Broadway, where, to my surprise, the guests were all furnished at dinner with ice-cream! The Astor House was, I think, not then built; and where the Fifth Avenue now is, was out of town. I went through Long Island Sound by steamer to some point in Rhode Island, where I took a railroad and was carried to Boston. From Boston I went to Cambridge in an omnibus that plied regularly between the towns, and was driven by one Moss, whom the Boston *Post* proposed, on account of his thirty years' faithful services, to honor with the title of D.D.—Doctor of Drivers. At Cambridge I found my cousin, William Curry, of Perry County, Alabama, a student of law."

A very short time after his arrival, he matriculated as a student in the famous Dane Law School, which has been in its career as distinguished for the eminence of its professors as for the greatness achieved by so many of its students. It had been founded in 1829, and named for its founder, according to whose stipulation Joseph Story was elected its first professor. The year before there had been only one law student in Harvard College. In 1829, under Story, the attendance in the Dane Law School was thirty; and thenceforward its numbers steadily increased. When Curry entered it in 1843, there were about one hundred and fifty law students. Story, then a Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, still continued a professor in the school; and his illustrious associate was Simon Greenleaf, author of the "Law of Evidence." Curry makes mention of Story's genial humor and cordiality, which contributed scarcely less than his great abil-

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ity to his wonderful success as a teacher of law. Story, on one occasion, introduced his colleague to an audience with an inimitable wit: "Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Professor Greenleaf: The best evidence of his law is his Law of Evidence." It is related of him, too, that at some public function, he toasted Mr. Edward Everett as follows:—

Eloquence flows
Where Ever-ett goes;

to which the latter promptly replied:—

However high one may climb in the legal profession in this Commonwealth, he will always find one Story higher.

A writer in the *Green Bag*, a Boston publication of the lighter sort for lawyers, who was a contemporary of Curry's in the Law School at Harvard, writes of Story as a teacher of law:

I had not enjoyed a sight of him until, as a law student, I confronted him at his professional desk. I lost attention to that first lecture in contemplating the great jurist, and in musing upon my knowledge of what he had achieved. When he presided at the moot-courts which he had established for the *nisi prius* practice of the students, or for their views upon a stated controversy, generally patterned from some case in his circuit, Professor Story was the embodiment of geniality, and seemed as pleased with the proceedings as would be a child at blindman's buff. His constant tenet to students was "the nobility and attractiveness of the legal profession."

Of his two law-teachers in the Dane School, Curry has left this interesting minute:—

Judge Story was a genial, cheerful, cordial man, full of humor and anecdote, very fond of the boys, and told us in

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his lectures charming incidents about such lawyers as Webster and Mason and William Pinkney, and Sargeant and Binney. Simon Greenleaf, a native of Maine, was chosen professor on recommendation of Judge Story. Without the affluence of learning or ornate diction of Judge Story, he was a more painstaking and accurate lawyer, with keener analysis and more logical power. He was quite popular, but stricter than his colleague, to whom he was deeply attached.

The scene, the intellectual atmosphere, the associations of instructors and companions, were all alike inspiring to the eager and impressionable mind of the young Southerner. It was the beginning of that characteristic Americanism, which grew and developed in him thenceforward as long as he lived; and which made him, while clinging tenaciously to the political concepts of the Calhoun theory of the Constitution, even after the real destruction of that theory by the event of war, as loyal to the government that had come to be based on other and adverse principles, as he had ever been to that which sought to perpetuate the Calhoun interpretation and failed.

Josiah Quincy was then President of Harvard College. Story and Greenleaf were illuminating the minds of their pupils with the splendor of their intellects and the richness of their knowledge. Anson Burlingame, Rutherford B. Hayes, Thomas J. Semmes, and many other men of subsequent distinction were among his classmates; while the New England air was vibrant with the stirring politics, the intellectual thought, and the unconventional religious ideas which characterized the Massachusetts of the period. Curry devoted himself with great industry to his law studies, and did a very

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considerable amount of miscellaneous reading. The libraries teemed with all sorts of books, and to them the students of the college had general access. Macaulay stirred him as with a trumpet-note:—

"Macaulay's Miscellanies, as they were then called," he writes, "were published in cheap form; and I read and re-read them with increasing profit and admiration. Few books have more affected my style and thought."

But books and lectures and law-studies were insufficient, in that keen air, to fill the measure of the young man's developing and eager thought. He went to hear the professors in the academic schools. Longfellow had just finished "The Spanish Student," and was discharging the duties of his professorship. Lowell was editing the *Pioneer* magazine in Boston, with Poe, Hawthorne, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Whittier and William Wetmore Story among its contributors; Jared Sparks was teaching history in Harvard, and Curry sat at his feet as at the feet of Gamaliel; while Wendell Phillips and William Lloyd Garrison and "The Liberator" were making history throughout America. In the national capitol at Washington, John Quincy Adams was pouring into the hopper of legislation the ever disappearing, but none the less fatal, "abolition petitions." John C. Calhoun, with logical exactness and prophetic foresight, was philosophizing upon the construction of the Federal Constitution, and foretelling the doom to come. Macready and Forrest and Charlotte Cushman and the elder Booth were playing to cultivated and intellectual audiences in the theatres of Boston; and Theodore Parker and Dr. Kirk and Dr. Walker were preaching in the

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churches the word of God according to the gospel of Boston. It was a period and an atmosphere worthy of the beginnings of the mental and spiritual life of a young man of such talents and ambitions as Curry's. Hawthorne, whose artist's soul was displeased by the strident clamor and obtrusive sentimentalism of the time, said that every other man one met had in his vest pocket a scheme for the reformation of the universe. It was indeed a time when New England was swept by a passion of humanitarianism and social sympathy.

Curry attended the theatres when he could, and witnessed the great reproductions of classic plays by actors and actresses, whose fame remains uneclipsed by that of any of their successors. He listened in the churches on Sundays to fervid ecclesiastical rhetoric, and to the promulgation of new and transcendental religious doctrines, with the prescient eagerness of one who was himself in later years destined to shine as a pulpit orator. He attended occasional meetings of the then despised and abhorred abolitionists, with little thought of the part that he should be called upon by his larger Americanism to play in a later attempted emancipation of the negro race from the bondage of credulity and ignorance. His career as a student in the Law School at Harvard was filled to overflowing with the awakening experiences of the place and times.

"The abolitionists," he writes of them in that day, "were a noisy and fanatical faction, with more strength in Massachusetts than in any other part of the Union, but were despised there as half-crazy and fanatical.

"Wendell Phillips, Tappan, Bowen, Garrison, and some women were the leaders," he continues. "I attended at

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Concord an abolition meeting,—hired a buggy, and drove that distance to attend an anti-slavery meeting. It was held in a church, and very few were present. In 1844 the abolition sentiment took form and organization under the name of the 'Liberty Party,' and I heard James G. Birney, the candidate of the party for the Presidency, deliver an address to not more than two hundred people in Faneuil Hall. Verily, times have changed since I was a student!"

The year 1844 was one of violent and tremendous political excitement. The abolitionists meant to destroy slavery, though its destruction should mean the destruction of the Union. They were the first secessionists. "Mark!" wrote Garrison in the *Liberator*. "How stands Massachusetts at this hour in reference to the Union? Just where she ought to be—in an attitude of open hostility."

"Let the Union be accursed," said the *Liberator*. "Look at the awful compromises of the Constitution by which that instrument is saturated with the blood of the slave!"

"So much for entering into a covenant with death, and an agreement with hell!" published the *Liberator*, concerning the Federal Constitution, twelve years after Curry had departed from Harvard. "We confess that we intend to trample under foot the Constitution of this country," said Mr. Wendell Phillips at a later date; and Mr. Garrison demanded, in 1855, "a Northern Confederacy, with no Union with slave-holders."

Of Calhoun, whose devotion to the Union under the Constitution Curry had already come clearly to comprehend, and whose philosophical and logical interpretation of that instrument he never ceased, through a long life of service to his country, to ap-

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prove, Von Holst, a hostile and antagonistic biographer has written:—

> The charge was wholly unfounded that he was endeavoring intentionally to incense the North and the South against each other, in order to promote the purpose of his party. He spoke the simple truth, when he asserted in his speech of March 9, 1836, that "however caluminated and slandered," he had "ever been devotedly attached to the Union and the institution of the country," and that he was "anxious to perpetuate them to the latest generation." He acted under the firm conviction of an imperious duty towards the South and towards the Union, and his assertion was but too well founded that these petitions for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia were blows on the wedge, which would ultimately break the Union asunder.

So it remains, in vindication of the truth of history, that however really the War between the States, from 1861 to 1865, was waged by the North to preserve the Union, the men in the North who desired to abolish slavery at all hazards were the first internal foes of the Union; and the Southern men, who wished to preserve the Union, in accordance with their interpretation of the Federal Constitution, placing local self government above the idea of Union, were none the less patriotic and well-based in their belief that they possessed the constitutional right to secede.

The great political storm was everywhere gathering head. The annexation of Texas, over which shone like a star the heroic and splendid story of the Alamo; the great question of slavery,—an institution which the civilized world had come at last to condemn; the tariff question, which had agitated

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the Nation and the States since the States had made the Nation; the Oregon boundary line, a burning phase of the slavery question—these were the things that fevered the States, and that stirred Massachusetts, and that stirred, too. Harvard College and its intellectual youth.

> Bliss it was in that dawn to be alive.
> But to be young was heaven.

The Whigs nominated Clay and Frelinghuysen. The acclaim rang throughout the Union:—

> Hurrah, boys! The country's risin'!
> Henry Clay and Frelinghuysen!

But the country did not rise that way. "Polk, Dallas and Texas," was the antiphonal war-cry of the Democrats; and the Democrats won. But in the meantime, with persistent and unwavering and almost unnoted obstinacy, the abolitionists of the *Liberator* type, under the leadership of Birney, and Phillips and Garrison, were gathering strength and momentum.

"Prior to the Whig nominations," writes Curry of the times, "I heard Sergeant S. Prentiss of Mississippi, one of the most eloquent men in America, make a speech to a packed audience in Faneuil Hall. It was one of the most thrilling specimens of platform oratory I ever listened to; and he carried his audience at pleasure. In the same hall I heard Vice-President Richard M. Johnson, a weak but honest old man, whose claim to popular support seemed to be based on a red-jacket, and the fact (of doubtful historical authenticity), that he killed Tecumseh. Being fond of politics I used to attend many political meetings of all the parties. Among Democrats, I heard Senator Levi Woodbury, afterwards a Judge of the Supreme Court; Charles

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G. Greene, editor of the Boston *Post;* George Bancroft, the historian; Orestes A. Brownson, since quite famous as editor of Brownson's *Review*. . . . I heard Daniel Webster several times. In appearance he was the most marked man I ever saw. In speaking, whether in Faneuil Hall or on Boston Common, before immense and enthusiastic assemblages, he was unimpassioned and calm. It was more than suspected that he did not regard the nomination of Mr. Clay with favor. I heard also John M. Berrien of Georgia, Miller of New Jersey, and Morse of Maine. The leading managing democrat was B. F. Hallett. Benjamin F. Butler, so famous since as 'Beast Butler,' was an active democrat. Charles Sumner was then a literary lawyer, a favorite of Judge Story; but not actively connected with politics."

In 1894, in a letter to Mr. Winthrop, he gave a further account of his recollections of Mr. Webster:—

WASHINGTON, D. C., 1736 M Street,
1 Jan., 1894.

DEAR MR. WINTHROP:—Yesterday your welcome letter of the 28th came, and I procured *Scribner*, which is not on our not too long list of periodicals, in order to read your article on Webster. It is very interesting and instructive, and the reception you speak of is cumulative in enforcement of the suggestion so frequently pressed upon you, to call in a stenographer, and give autobiographical memoranda, in more connected form than is found in numerous publications, for the delight of your wide circle of friends in Europe and America. A little article on your student life in Mr. Webster's office would be a valuable contribution to a magazine.

The reply to Hayne, for vigorous English, for felicity of illustration, for impassioned eloquence, is unsurpassed in American oratory. Of course I am not expected to concur in the general and unchangeable popular verdict in refer-

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ence to constitutional interpretation, or logical conclusiveness.

In 1844 I had the pleasure of hearing Mr. Webster twice, once in Faneuil Hall, when he addressed a meeting held to ratify Mr. Clay's nomination for the Presidency; and a second time, when he presided over an immense meeting, held on Boston Common. I was a mere boy, not unfamiliar with Prentiss, Hillard, Bowden, Yancey; but I could not help wondering at the great fame of Mr. W., as an orator. The closing sentences of the *Scribner* article, taken from your Central Park address, express my estimate of and admiration for the man; but, judging from the two occasions when I heard him, his was not the eloquence that moved assemblies. Slow of utterance, deliberate in manner, measuring his words, strong and almost faultless in diction, profound in his reasoning, his influence, it seemed to me, was from matter rather than manner, from weight of thought rather than capacity to arouse emotion. His presence was more majestic, more commanding, than that of any man I ever saw, and the epithet "godlike" was better adapted. It seemed to me, an inexperienced youth, when I stood near the platform on Boston Common, that any child of ten years of age would not have hesitated instantaneously to select him from the thirty thousand as incomparably the greatest intellect. Mr. Everett I never saw nor heard. Mr. Choate I heard frequently; John Quincy Adams once, and Bancroft, Brownson, Woodbury several times.

Among other orators of the period and vicinage to whom he listened in his student days at Harvard were Dr. Edward Amasa Park, then professor of sacred rhetoric in Andover Seminary, an "exponent of the doctrines that are embodied in the Andover Creed and called the New England system of theology"; George Stillman Hillard, lawyer, author and

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orator; Frederick Douglass and William Lloyd Garrison, the negro and the white abolitionist agitators; and Robert Rantoul, Jr., whose contemporary fame throughout the country as an orator of unusual and powerful eloquence, as an able and persistent antagonist of protection and centralization in the Federal government, and as an advocate of educational reforms, has in the lapse of time, save in his own section, long since become only a memory and a name.

It may be well imagined that Curry's time was full. Law studies, politics, pulpit orators, great actors, and new and inspiring associations in many directions gave him much to think of and to do. Yet with it all, he found the leisure which an industrious and busy man can always find for some other yet desirable work; and nearly every week he wrote for publication over the signature of "Ion," and sent to a paper in Tuscaloosa, letters on various subjects, but dealing largely with the subject of contemporary politics, and the actors in the great political drama, whose earlier scenes were then beginning to be first presented upon the stage of history.

Not the least among the broadening forces that were thus entering the young man's life, and shaping his character and career, was one which came finally to dominate his very being and to consecrate his highest energies. Horace Mann, and his work for education, enlisted at this time Curry's attention and interest, and thenceforward exercised upon him a strong and vital influence.

It is illustrative of Curry's breadth of view, and tolerance of adverse opinion on the part of others, that although he was even then modelling his politi-

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cal thought after that of Calhoun; and although Horace Mann was conspicuous among the anti-slavery agitators in politics, the young Harvard student did not permit the prejudice of partisanship to obscure his vision of Mann's great educational ideas.

"Under a full sense of my responsibility—to my country and my God," said Mann on the floor of Congress some years later, "I deliberately say, better disunion—better a civil or a servile war,—better anything that God in his providence shall send,—than an extension of the bounds of slavery."

War came; and Curry bore arms in defence of the principles upon which he conceived the Union to have been founded, involving among others the principle of local self-government on the part of the States with reference to African slavery. Near the close of a long life, and after a generation and more spent in the service of education in the South, he paid the tribute of his faith and admiration to the elder educator of the North:—

When I was in Cambridge there occurred the celebrated controversy, since historic, between Horace Mann and the thirty-one Boston teachers. Mann's glowing periods, earnest enthusiasm and democratic ideas fired my young mind and heart; and since that time I have been an enthusiastic and consistent advocate of universal education.

The value of a great man lies in his power to raise up imitators and disciples.

Henry Bernard in the East and Curry in the South almost share with Mann the honor of having led the movement for popular education and peda-

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gogic reform in this country in the nineteenth century.

"In 1847, after my return to Alabama, as a candidate for and a member of the Legislature, I spoke for free schools and voted for every proposition looking to the endowment of the State University. In 1853 and 1855 I was again a representative from Talladega County, and as a member of the Committee on Education sustained Judge Meek's bill, which became the first law on the statute book establishing public schools."

Meek's name, which is better remembered among lawyers as that of an eminent and cultivated jurist, and in the literary world as the author of "Red Eagle," an epic poem which embodies the romantic story of Weatherford, the Indian chief, is deserving of commemoration for his origination of the system of public education in Alabama in 1853, long before it had come in many other Southern States of the American Union.

Among Curry's fellows in the Dane Law School has already been mentioned Rutherford B. Hayes, who succeeded to the Presidency of the United States in 1877 under circumstances that threatened republican institutions in their consideration and solution. Of Mr. Hayes' relation and attitude towards the contest for the Presidency, and the famous Electoral Commission, he has himself made a record in his letter to Senator Sherman, dated Columbus, Ohio, 27 November, 1876:—

You feel, I am sure, as I do about this whole business. A fair election would have given us about forty electoral votes at the South,—at least that many. But we are not to allow our friends to defeat one outrage and fraud by an-

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other. There must be nothing crooked on our part. Let Mr. Tilden have the place by violence, intimidation, and fraud, rather than undertake to prevent it by means that will not bear the closest scrutiny.

Curry, in the year of the Hayes-Tilden election, wrote of Mr. Hayes:—

Hayes, three or four years my senior, boarded in the same home with myself, and we were quite intimate. He was a "good fellow," studious and upright, but not specially promising. To human appearance then my prospect for the Presidency was equal to his.

The following rather naïve entry in his diary, reminiscent of the days at Harvard, is characteristic of the man of later years, who always recognized the value of personal appearance and demeanor; and who exemplified in his own person the attractiveness of dress, and the polish of the best social life:

I did not visit any ladies while I was at the Law School; but for a time I attended a dancing-school, and became quite fond of the amusement.

The sacrifice of not visiting the ladies, which had finally given him such pleasure when at Athens, is easily attributable to the seriousness of his purpose at Harvard; and it may very well be imagined of him that even from attendance upon the dancing-school ambition was not altogether absent.

He had matriculated in the Dane Law School, September 13, 1843. In February, 1845, he received his degree of Bachelor of Laws; and set his face homeward in the same month. He stopped at various places on his journey back to Alabama; and has recorded, in connection with these pauses by the way, an occasional interesting incident.

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Dixon H. Lewis, who Curry says was "the heaviest man he ever saw," was then in Washington as a Senator from Alabama. He was a friend of William Curry's, and learning of young Curry's journey homeward, wrote him a letter inviting him to visit the national capitol. In response to this agreeable invitation, Curry spent a week in Washington on his way home, as the guest of Senator Lewis, and therefore under most agreeable and advantageous auspices.

"The annexation of Texas was under discussion in the Senate," he records of this visit, "and I heard a number of speeches. I remember to have heard Hannigan of Indiana, and Allen, the present (1876) Governor of Ohio. Mr. Lewis took me to see John C. Calhoun, who was then Secretary of State. A number of persons were in his room, among them 'Mike Walsh,' a 'subterranean' politician from New York, who would now be called a boss, a leader of the working men, who was afterwards elected to Congress. Mr. Calhoun was a brilliant talker, rapid, suggestive, profound. He was then in his sixty-second year. His burning eyes, prophetic face and lofty mien gave him the look of a chieftain around whom men would gladly rally. He received me very kindly, as he was very fond of the company of young men. He was giving a sketch of Mr. Van Buren, as an adroit politician, a manipulator of conventions, and unsound on the tariff question. This was my only interview with Mr. Calhoun, and I prize the recollection of it. In all my political career I was an adherent of the Calhoun school of politics. I was very familiar with his writings, and I now regard him as no whit inferior to Aristotle, Burke, Bismarck, Cavour, Gladstone, or any statesman or publicist that ever lived."

This is high praise of Calhoun coming from a man of Curry's breadth of view and large-mindedness, es-

pecially in the light of events through which he subsequently passed that shattered most of Calhoun's political ideals. But it was a deliberate judgment and an interesting testimony to the commanding influence exerted by Calhoun in this epoch of American life.

Among other noted men whom Curry met during his week's sojourn with Mr. Lewis in Congress, were George McDuffie of South Carolina, William Henry Haywood of North Carolina, and Thomas H. Benton of Missouri, all three of whom were then Senators from their respective States. He witnessed the inauguration of James K. Polk, the democrat who had been elected in an exciting campaign over his Whig competitor, Henry Clay, and the induction into office of the vice-president, George M. Dallas. He disposes of Dallas with the remark, "He wore long silvery hair and was a graceful elocutionist." The new President, a native of North Carolina and a citizen of Tennessee, in his inaugural address arrested the young man's attention with his tribute to the Constitution and the Union.

> To perpetuate them, it is our sacred duty to preserve the Union. Who shall assign limits to the achievements of free minds and free hands under the protection of this glorious Union? No treason to mankind since the organization of society, would be equal in atrocity to that of him who would lift his hand to destroy it. He would overthrow the noblest structure of human wisdom which protects himself and his fellow men. He would stop the progress of free government and involve his country either in anarchy or in despotism.

This was sound doctrine to this twenty-year-old boy over whom Calhoun's compelling presence and

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great fame had cast their spell, and it found lodgment not alone in his mind, but went to his heart, and became a part of his life.

Travelling home from Washington with Senator W. T. Colquitt and two of his daughters as companions, the party went by rail to Covington, Georgia, and there took a stage. At Franklin, Alabama, Curry again took up his journey alone by rail to Montgomery, whence he travelled in a two-horse hack to Talladega. The young Alabamian reached home in an exalted state of mind, for he had travelled much and seen much of men and cities. He had touched hands with his political heroes at the national capitol, and had heard presidents speak and hobnobbed with Senators and felt the impulse of the time at the very center of things. His year and one-half at Harvard and in New England had been, indeed, a vivid and crucial year, and doubtless had developed habits of mind and points of view which unconsciously moulded much of his after life. It is not far-fetched to fancy that from this tutelage came no little of his subsequent aptitude for interpretation, instinct for cosmopolitanism, contempt for intellectual violence and respect for the other man, even if he rejected the other man's opinion as he had rejected most of the current New England dogmas. Curry's nature was fiery and assertive, until suffering tempered his spirit, but he managed, under the most adverse conditions, to escape the blight of provincialism and to hold a place as a citizen of the world. New England, itself, at this time, was boundlessly and aggressively provincial, but the experience of trying to understand other conditions and to do justice to other temperaments—something

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perhaps of the high-mindedness and detachment in the "quiet and still air" about the ancient seminary of learning, helped to free his mobile brain and ready sympathy from the shackles of crude thinking and rough obstinacy. It would have been helpful to the larger good if some of the young Sumners and Boutwells of the period in New England could have come South for a part of their education, and thus gained first-hand knowledge and perhaps intelligent sympathy with a people whose destinies they were to affect profoundly, but about whom they knew very little, and—most tragic of all ignorances—did not know that they did not know.

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CHAPTER V

LAW AND LEGISLATION

The years 1845 and 1846 were swift fateful years in the life of the virile young republic. It was just entering upon its first aggressive and foreign war. The empire of Texas was received without precedent directly into statehood without a preliminary and preparatory period in territorial status. Sinister motives were attributed in this annex to the friends of slavery; and the swift enactment of statutes, passing of resolutions in Congress, and movement of armies in the field, showed how tense the matter was and how bound up with the supreme question of public policy vexing the allied states. Annexation would unquestionably strengthen the slave power, but the spirit of expansion was abroad as it was in 1898 when the explosion of a powder magazine in a warship in Cuban waters set a nation irresistibly toward war. Men rejoiced in the ability of the United States to "lick all creation," and a certain youthful boasting and indulgence in superlatives ruled in common talk throughout the land.

For young Curry, down in Alabama, the years were fallow, preparatory years, during which the gifted, well born, well educated young man was getting ready for participation in great affairs. According to the custom of the day, he was reading law in the office of a local lawyer, Mr. Samuel W. Rice.

"At Talladega, I boarded," he writes, "with Mr. Rice; and William W. Knox and I used to go home only six miles nearly every Saturday night. While reading law, I wrote editorials for the 'Watchtower,' visited the ladies, attended a debating society and made many friends and acquaintances in the country." These were useful but innocuous occupations which could, by no chance, do him any harm, and which assure us that the much travelled collegian was not out of touch with other normal stay-at-home young men in that southwestern country. In 1846 he tendered his services to the government as a soldier in the war with Mexico, but his attempt at soldiering proved abortive.

With his eye on politics, he saw two questions, both settled affirmatively, as the principal issues of the state election; "biennial sessions of the legislature and the removal of the capitol from Tuscaloosa." Hon. Franklin W. Bowdon, afterwards a representative in Congress from the district, was a representative from Talladega County, and a leader in the legislature in carrying the two measures. The capitol was removed to Montgomery, the city and county furnishing the building free of cost.

Early in 1846 it became apparent that the adjustment of the boundary line between Texas and Mexico would lead to war. A fierce controversy arose between the Whig and Democratic parties as to the responsibility for the war. The act of Congress for raising troops said that war existed by act of Mexico. . . . The war was popular, and volunteers were numerous and enthusiastic. In May, 1846, a company of infantry was raised in Talladega County. Jacob D. Shelley was captain. I was appointed

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second sergeant. Several meetings were held, and I made a number of speeches, in one of which I warned the people against the folly of believing that Mexico could be conquered in a few months, as the Spaniards were proverbially obstinate and resolute.

We marched from Talladega to Wetumpka, where we embarked on a boat for Mobile. At various points receptions were given, and I had to make speeches. We went into camp at Mobile. After annoying delays, we were, with other companies, organized into a regiment, and mustered in for six months. Then the War Department refused to accept us for that period of service, and we were discharged.

The bulk of the company re-enlisted for twelve months. It being uncertain when the troops would be ordered to the scene of war, five of us, Andrew W. Bowie, James Montgomery, William P. Bowden, Dr. C. G. Cunningham and myself, in a most foolhardy spirit, resolved to go to the army on our own charges. A small schooner, the *Duane* (a former revenue cutter, discharged for unseaworthiness) was in the port of Mobile, loading with supplies. . . . We engaged passage and shipped for Point Isabel, against the advice and protest of friends. To us it seemed a dashing, gallant thing, and we enjoyed by anticipation, the frolic. The second day out I became sick, and so continued for twelve days. My weight then was not more than one hundred and twelve pounds. Two days we were becalmed, and under a hot vertical sun we fished and read and played cards, and indulged in day dreams. Then came a terrific storm, the worst I ever saw, and our frail barque seemed every moment as if it would sink. The captain was skillful. When we reached the bar at Point Isabel, the vessel leaked rapidly, and the pumps were used incessantly. By means of a pilotboat, to get into which we ran a narrow risk of being drowned, we were, with our luggage, transported to shore. We bade a ready adieu to the *Duane*, which two days afterwards sank in the harbor.

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The day after landing we made our way to a regiment of Texas Rangers, Jack Hays, colonel; Ben McCulloch, lieutenant-colonel; Chevallier, major; and attached ourselves to a company commanded by Captain Acklere. We were not formally mustered into service.

On the fourth of July there was a celebration. Ashbel Smith, who had been minister from Texas to France, made a speech; and so did I.

We remained in camp a week or more, when Dr. Cunningham became dangerously ill, and was ordered to be sent home. An attendant being required, as I was the least, the youngest, and very feeble, I was selected; and unwillingly I became the companion of the sick, hoping, however, to return to Mexico.

It was a command, whose officers and men alike saw gallant and conspicuous service in the Mexican War; being genuine soldiers and fighting folks. Especially picturesque was the figure of Ben McCulloch, the lieutenant-colonel, who had just missed joining Crockett by the merest accident, when the latter had set out on the journey that closed with his life at the ill-fated Alamo; who had handled a gun under Sam Houston in the battle of San Jacinto; and who had served in the Congress of the young republic of Texas; and had been shot in the arm in a duel with Reuben Davis of Mississippi. McCulloch rendered courageous service in the Mexican War, and after its close went with the 'Forty-Niners to California, where he illustrated for a while in his person as sheriff of Sacramento County the glowing verity of Bret Harte's later "Tales of the Argonauts." He came back to the East in 1853, and was killed in battle as a brigadier-general in the service of the Confederacy.

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When Curry reached Talladega Dr. Cunningham was much improved; but the psychological moment for a return to the Mexican War did not recur, and he resumed his reading of law in Mr. Rice's office.

"During the year," he says, "after a long and severe examination by Hon. George W. Stone, a circuit judge, I was admitted to the bar, with all the privileges and duties of a lawyer."

In 1847 he was busy with politics. During 1848 and 1849 he practiced his profession with assiduity and apparent success; for in the latter year he was solicitor of Tallapoosa County and had, among others, one or two murder cases. But the routine of law-practice did not appeal to him; and, indeed, it is more than probable that he had intended its practice from the beginning, as did so many of the young disciples of Coke in the South of the earlier half of the nineteenth century, as a mere means of entrance to the more alluring and larger field of politics. In 1850 he abandoned the practice of law, and settled upon a plantation on Salt Creek in Talladega County, that had been given him by his father.

"Although brought up on a farm," he says of himself at this time, "I knew little practically of agriculture; and while fond of the country, my tastes did not lie in the direction of making corn and cotton. My farming, being entrusted largely to negroes, was not profitable. I was economical and never went into debt. I preferred books to overseeing negroes."

This little bit of self-analysis displays quite clearly Curry's real tendencies and ambitions. The drudgery and hard dry exactions of that jealous mistress the law certainly did not appeal to him. Tilling the

soil was clearly obnoxious to his tastes. Even at that early date the real man stood revealed. The strongest impulses of his nature were oratorical and didactic. He not only felt the capacity and the genius to move his fellows by speech, but he had a vehement longing to get up and convince everybody in sight to his way of thinking. As Walter Bagehot observed of Gladstone, he had *a nature* towards his audience. He was sure that if they only knew what he knew they would feel as he felt and believe as he believed. If the cause were moral his enthusiasms increased tenfold, and to the oratorical and didactic impulses were added immediately the dramatic and contentious impulses. Politics attracted him in the mid-century period because the issues of the time were moral and deeply based on principles and enthusiasms and deep loyalties. The pulpit attracted him in the sad days of reconstruction when character and integrity and spiritual steadfastness seemed the only stable things in a tumbled-down world; and the platform attracted him later on when the sun broke through the clouds of the dreary time and he caught the hopeful vision of a land made over in the strength of a new generation trained to new duties and new occasions.

In the meantime, in July, 1847, he became a candidate for the office of representative in the Alabama Legislature. He was now well launched upon a political career, which was congenial to his tastes, and not antagonistic to his studies and his habits of mind, and in which he was destined to become distinguished. In the spring of this year he had served as secretary of the State Democratic Convention at Montgomery, which nominated Reuben Chapman

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for governor. His services had already come to be in great demand as a public speaker and the eyes of the democratic leaders of the State were fixed upon him. In regard to his skill and success as a speaker, he modestly writes of himself at this time:

> My small size and youthful appearance and the popularity of my father gave me advantages over my competitors. We had appointments at various places, and made public speeches. I had some fluency and success as a speaker.

The burning political question of the day was that of slavery in the Territories; and especially with regard to the Wilmot proviso, a measure that had been introduced into the United States House of Representatives by Mr. Wilmot of Pennsylvania, on behalf of many northern Democrats, applying to the territory proposed to be acquired from Mexico in the settlement of the war by negotiation, the provision of the Ordinance of 1787, which later came to be the language of the Thirteenth Amendment, that "neither slavery nor involuntary servitude shall ever exist in any part of said territory except for crime, whereof the party shall first be duly convicted." The Whigs and the northern Democrats united in favor of the Wilmot proviso in the National House of Representatives, and it had passed the House in the preceding year, but went to the Senate too late to be acted upon.

The introduction and discussion of the Wilmot proviso aroused a crisis of passions upon the slavery question; and the spectre, which the prophetic imagination of Mr. Jefferson had long before conjured up, upon the passage of the Missouri Compro-

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mise Act, of a division of the country upon sectional lines,—a vision that "alarmed him like a firebell in the night,"—now presented itself, not as the unsubstantial pageant of a dream, but as a terrible reality.

Upon this imminent question Curry took no uncertain stand. A letter written by him in that year, on the threshold of his political career, attests from its age-yellowed pages the sincerity of his convictions, and the lofty courage of his purpose:—

MR. JAMES H. JOINER,

Dear Sir:—A report, prejudicial to my success, has been in circulation in the lower end of the county, that I am in favor of a property qualification for voters. It is false.

My position in reference to General Taylor is misunderstood. The perilous exigency of the times demands a president who will resist all interference by the general government with our domestic institutions. This discrimination, recognized and adopted in the Wilmot Proviso, is degrading to the South, and all freemen must feel that "death is preferable to acknowledged inferiority." To resist the effort which will be made to prohibit slavery in the territory to be acquired from Mexico (as just indemnity for the expenses of this war, the spoliations of our commerce, and injuries done to our citizens, which would have justified a declaration of war many years ago), it becomes our duty to take "firm, united and concerted action."

The South can never support any man for President who is not sound on this paramount and controlling question. Their support of any man would be idle, except as necessary to his success. Then some man must be selected who has popularity,—upon whom all parties at the South can unite. General Taylor, I think, is that man. The West is not quite thoroughly corrupted on the slavery

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question; and enough of them might go with us to secure his election.

General Taylor, I have no doubt, is a freetrade man. If he runs as a rabid, partisan Whig, determined to advance Whig measures, without testing the measures, the success of which under Mr. Polk's administration has made his name illustrious and immortal, I would hesitate long. The real issue should be decisively and determinately made up, before I could give him my humble support.

I am not wedded to General Taylor. President Polk, Calhoun, Stevenson, Butler, Walker, Lewis, could get my support as soon or more so, if there were a reasonable probability of success. The South should take her position. The question has to be met. It ought not to be shuffled off or evaded longer. To unite on any one man would be an evidence of our concert, our union, our strength. The emergency requires it. The Constitution requires it. Truth, justice, patriotism, and our interest require of us something more than empty bravado. Action, action, action is not more necessary in oratory than in times of danger.

Yours respectfully,

July 19th. 1847. J. L. M. CURRY.

This was a remarkable letter to have been written by a youth of twenty-two, who had scarcely finished his law studies. With the understanding of the patriot, no less than with the keen discernment of the politician, he recognized the political dangers that confronted the country, and the possible solution of those dangers in the election of some safe, conservative man as President. The North and the South were facing each other with hostile and defiant fronts on the great issue, which according to the theory of the former involved the cause of humanity itself, and according to that of the latter carried

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with it a continuance, or a destruction, as the result might prove, of the civilization and social existence of the South. Over against the fiery denunciations of slavery by Garrison and Wendell Phillips and Owen Lovejoy and Frothingham, Calhoun set the logic of his conclusions in the expression:—

To destroy the existing relations would be to destroy this prosperity (of the Southern States), and to place the two races in a state of conflict which must end in the expulsion or extirpation of one or the other. No other can be substituted compatible with their peace or security. The difficulty is in the diversity of the races. So strongly drawn is the line between the two in consequence, and so strengthened by the force of habit and education that it is impossible for them to exist together in the community where their numbers are so nearly equal as in the slaveholding States, under any other relation than that which now exists. Social and political equality between them is impossible. No power on earth can overcome the difficulty. The causes lie too deep in the principles of our nature to be surmounted. But, without such equality, to change the present condition of the African race, were it possible, would be but to change the form of slavery.

This is a lucid, powerful statement and read in the light of the present, after fifty years of freedom and education and social experimentation, makes it very clear how honest and sincere were the men of the Calhoun type throughout the country, and how well grounded their fears. Men who felt in this way stood on higher ground than greed or inhumanity. Surely no mere oligarchy of wealth could feel and speak after this fashion.

Curry, with the recognition that soldiers are rarely

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politicians, and even more rarely partisans, saw in General Taylor, Whig though he acclaimed himself, a figure before which the stormy passions of the political period might subside; and in this patriotic contemplation of the situation many other older and wiser men of his day shared. Yet with all his eagerness to save the country from its impending peril, he fearlessly proclaimed his principles of devotion to the Federal Constitution, as construed by the school of democracy to which he professed allegiance.

On the first Monday in August, 1847, the legislative election was held; and among all the candidates for the Alabama House of Representatives in his county, Curry received the highest number of votes. The legislative sessions had been made biennial; and in the first biennial session which assembled in the new capitol of the State, at Montgomery, later destined to witness the birth, and for a brief time to be the home, of the ill-fated Confederacy, he took the oath of office as a legislator. The session was distinguished among other things of a different character by the election of a United States Senator. The body was overwhelmingly democratic; and the strict-construction candidate was Curry's friend and recent host, Senator Dixon M. Lewis, whom he had named in his letter to Joiner, as worthy of the Presidential nomination, along with General Taylor, the conquering hero of the Mexican War; President Polk, under whose administration that war had been successfully waged; the great triumvir, John C. Calhoun; Andrew Stevenson of Virginia; General William Orlando Butler of Kentucky, who for his gallantry at Monterey had received two swords of honor, and Leroy Pope Walker,

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speaker of the Alabama House of Representatives, and later Confederate Secretary of War.

Lewis belonged to the Calhoun school of democracy. He was a strict constructionist, and an ultra State rights democrat. William R. King, his democratic competitor, who had served the State as senator, and who had the year before returned from Paris, whither he had gone as minister to France in 1844, by appointment of President Tyler, was a follower of Van Buren; and went down in defeat before the Nullifier and Secessionist, Lewis.

Lewis was a man of great stature, and weighed considerably more than four hundred pounds. It is said that furniture had to be constructed for his especial use, and that he always engaged two seats in a stage coach or railway car. He was a man of fine ability and noble feelings; and the story is told of him that upon the occasion of the shipwreck of a steamer on which he was a passenger, he refused to enter the boat that was let down to take off the other passengers, until they were all safely landed, for fear of imperilling their safety; and was in imminent danger in the meantime until his final rescue.

"Upon reaching Montgomery," writes Curry of his new experience in the legislature, "I went to the 'Hall,' the leading hotel. The large reception-room was crowded. Mr. King was in one part, surrounded by his friends; Mr. Lewis in another, alike surrounded. My preference for Mr. Lewis being known, I was led to him, and he seated me upon his knee. I was apparently a boy, beardless and slender; Mr. Lewis was the largest man I ever saw. Mr. W. L. Yancey, afterwards so famous, was present, and an ardent supporter of Mr. Lewis, who at the election by the Legislature, was chosen on the eighteenth ballot."

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William Lowndes Yancey, whom Curry mentions in the foregoing paragraph, was at that time a member of Congress. It was in this year of 1846 that, as has been said of him, "his mission began." He had been an antagonist of Nullification in South Carolina, where he edited a newspaper that attacked Calhoun and Hayne. Later he moved to Alabama, and formulated that expression of political faith among Southern democrats, that came to be known as "the Alabama platform"; and which in 1860, in the Democratic Convention at Charleston, under the influence of his flaming eloquence, was made the Southern program, and caused the division of the democracy of the Union. Possessed of an unsurpassed and compelling gift of oratory, he was a man of great personal modesty and self-effacement; and he was as much beloved by his friends and political followers as he was feared and hated by his political antagonists. The fame of Yancey's wonderful eloquence, continuing long since the departure of his generation, is still cherished by the descendants of the men who heard it, both gentle and simple, in the Southern States; where

> They'll speak of him for years to come
> In cottage-chronicle and tale.
> When for aught else renown is dumb,
> His legend shall prevail.

Upon its organization, the Alabama House of Representatives elected Leroy Pope Walker its speaker. In appointing his committees, Mr. Walker gave Curry an immediate, though not undeserved prominence, by making him chairman of the extremely important committee on Privileges and

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Elections; and he also gave him a position on the Judiciary Committee.

The only bill of serious importance introduced by Curry during the session was one "to reform the evils of local legislation by transferring to county and to court jurisdiction many matters which had burdened the legislature." It was a bill in favor of Curry's favorite democratic doctrine of the right of local self-government,—a doctrine that Mr. Burke has accurately and strikingly described:—

> To be attached to the subdivision, to love the little platoon we belong to in society, is the first principle,—the germ, as it were,—of public affections. It is the first link in the series by which we proceed towards a love to our country, and to mankind.

To its author's satisfaction the bill became a law.

Bills to fund the University debt and for the increase of taxes were the subject of frequent and animated discussion in the legislature. Curry supported both; and he spoke in favor of free public schools, and voted for every proposition looking toward the endowment of the State University.

"I always voted for measures in favor of education," he records of this period of his earliest legislative experience.

During this session of the legislature, the body gave a reception to Generals John A. Quitman and James Shields, both of whom had distinguished themselves in the War with Mexico; and who, like other heroes of that recent struggle, were in high public favor, wherever they went.

During this session, too, Asa Whitney, the originator of the scheme of a transcontinental railroad,

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and through whose efforts appropriations were first secured in 1853 for the first surveys covering the northern, southern, and central routes, delivered an address before the legislature in advocacy of his scheme, and sought its endorsation by resolution. Curry, in recalling this speech in 1876, did not remember that Mr. Whitney's efforts in endeavoring to obtain resolutions in behalf of his Pacific railroad were successful.

Another legislative visitor of the period was Miss Dorothea Dix, whose name is famous in America for her efforts in behalf of State legislation for the establishment of insane hospitals and asylums throughout the country. In her beneficent work for the amelioration of the condition of prisoners, paupers and lunatics, she is said to have appeared before the respective legislatures of every state east of the Rocky Mountains, and to have been largely instrumental in procuring legislative action in a number of these states for the establishment of state hospitals for the insane. This was her mission in visiting Montgomery: but it does not appear that she was on this occasion successful.

In 1848 occurred the Presidential election and the birth at Buffalo, New York, on August 9th of a new political party, the Free Soilers, which adopted a platform containing the declaration that Congress had no more power to make a slave than to make a king. This platform further declared that there should be no more slave states and no more slave territories; and nominated Martin Van Buren for President and Charles Francis Adams for Vice-president. The Democracy earlier in the year had in their convention at Baltimore nomi-

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nated Lewis Cass of Michigan and William Orlando Butler of Kentucky for President and Vice-president, and had renewed the strict-construction platforms of 1840 and 1844;—but with a significance as ominous as that with which Mr. Jefferson had viewed the adoption of the Missouri Compromise. It had voted down by an overwhelming majority a resolution that Congress had no power to interfere with slavery, either in the territories or the states. The Whig Convention, following that of the Democracy, had wisely recognized the influence of war upon the popular mind; and had done what Curry in his letter to Joiner had intimated a desire to see the Democrats do. It had met at Philadelphia in June, and nominated General Zachary Taylor for President, and Millard Fillmore of New York for Vice-president, without a platform or other declaration of party principles. Taylor was a slave-holder; and many Democrats in the South, "preferred a slave-holding candidate without a platform to a non-slave-holding candidate, on a platform in which support of slavery had been voted down." Taylor and Fillmore were elected by a majority of both free and slave states. The Northern Democrats believed that the Southern democracy had betrayed the Cass ticket: and when Congress met in December, nearly all of the Free State Democrats voted in the House for a bill to organize the territories of California and New Mexico, with the Wilmot Proviso attached.

The belief entertained by the Northern democracy that the Southern Democrats had not been loyal to Cass was certainly not true in Curry's case. Though, with a wisdom beyond his years and experience, he had put General Taylor forward as his fore-

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most candidate, after his party had made its platform and its nominations he zealously supported both.

"I made a number of speeches in favor of General Cass," he writes in his record; "but the military fame of General Taylor gave him an early success."

Prior to his election to the legislature in August, 1847, an event had occurred in Curry's life of paramount importance above politics or any experience of office-holding or political campaigning. On the 4th of March, 1847, he married Ann Alexander Bowie, whose father, Judge Alexander Bowie, was born in Abbeville district, South Carolina, and died December 30, 1866, in Talladega. He was a graduate of the South Carolina College, a member of the legislature of that state, and at the Nullification Convention, a popular lawyer, and a very eloquent speaker. He moved to Talladega County, Alabama, in 1836; and was a trustee of the State University and chancellor of the Northern Division of the State. His son-in-law has left of him the memorial that "he was a fine conversationist, a graceful writer, and a scholarly, Christian gentleman." Mrs. Curry's mother was Susan Jack, a member of a prominent South Carolina family; and Mrs. Curry herself was born near Abbeville, prior to the father's removal to Talladega.

The issue of this marriage was four children, Susan Lamar, William Alexander, Manly Bowie, and Jackson Thomas. Of these, only two arrived at adult age. William Alexander Curry was born in 1854 and died in the following year; and Jackson Thomas Curry, who was born in 1860, also died in the year succeeding his birth. The oldest child,

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Susan Lamar Curry, who was born September 2, 1850, married November 13, 1873, Reverend John B. Turpin, and died January 7, 1881. The son who grew to manhood was Manly Bowie Curry, who was born April 23, 1857. He was educated at the University of Virginia, and was a captain in the United States Army in the Philippines, after the Spanish-American War. He was killed in an automobile accident at Atlanta, Georgia, December 18, 1907. At the time of his death he was a major in the United States Army, and Paymaster of the Department of the Gulf. He left a widow and three small children to survive him.

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CHAPTER VI

THE BONE OF CONTENTION

CURRY writes in his record, long after the stormy passions engendered by the politics of the slavery period had passed away:—

1850 was a year of much political excitement. Questions growing out of the acquisition of territory from Mexico deeply agitated the Southern mind. In Congress what was called the "Wilmot Proviso," prohibiting the introduction of African slavery into the territories lately acquired by expenditure of common blood and treasure, had divided political parties, and exasperated the North and the South. Since the close of the Mexican War, slavery as affecting the territories was the "bone of contention." A large party at the North demanded that the territories should be kept free from the "curse." The South felt that to exclude their peculiar property from common territory was a flagrant injustice, an insulting discrimination, and a violation of the Constitution. The two sections began to grow apart, and to feel alienation and animosity. Bills were numerous, during these years, in Congress, to adjust the dispute. Debates were able. Calhoun and Webster were then living; and they represented the two sides of the question.

David Wilmot, a democratic member of Congress from Pennsylvania, had introduced his famous "Proviso" in 1846. It consisted, as has been heretofore partially stated, of an amendment to the pending bill

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for appropriating two millions of dollars for the purchase of a part of Mexico, and the amendment provided that neither slavery nor involuntary servitude except for crime should ever exist in said territory. The amendment passed the House of Representatives and failed of passage in the Senate; but it gave rise to the "Free-Soil" movement, and split the Northern and Southern democracy like a wedge. The Wilmot Proviso and the Missouri Compromise constitute the two crucial measures in the history of slavery legislation. Mr. Jefferson, in a sort of despair, called the Compromise "the Knell of the Union." To the Northern men of the 'forties the Proviso seemed the tocsin of the armed conflict necessary to preserve its life.

"The coincidence of a marked principle, moral and political, with a geographical line," said Jefferson, with pregnant prescience, of the Missouri Compromise, "once conceived, I feared would never more be obliterated from the mind; that it would be recurring on every occasion, and renewing irritations, until it would kindle such mutual and mortal hatred as to render separation preferable to eternal discord."

The object of the Missouri Compromise Act of 1820, as that of the Wilmot Proviso, was to delimit the extension of slavery: the former prohibiting slavery thenceforward north of the line of 36° 30′; and the latter, as stated, prohibiting it in the newly acquired Mexican territory. In 1846, the time of the Proviso, the great issue had come to be too exciting to admit of the picturesque and vituperative phraseology which men like John Randolph had bestowed upon the earlier measure.

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The forces of North and South were beginning to align themselves for the titanic struggle which was to follow in less than two decades.

"In 1849–50 certain laws were passed, called 'Compromise Measures,'" continues Curry. "The spirit and general tenor of this legislation, it was thought by many persons, especially in South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi, were very hostile to the rights and equality of the South in the Union. In this year, 1850, and in 1851, an attempt was made to organize a party favorable to secession. I favored it, but the movement was unwise, premature and unpopular."

The Compromise Measures of 1850 were a series of acts dealing, for the most part, with the slavery question and the rights of the Northern and Southern States under the Constitution. Henry A. Wise of Virginia spoke of these measures as "an awful pacification"; but the stringent Fugitive Slave Law, written into the Compromise Acts by James Murray Mason of Virginia, served to make them the instrument of delaying the "irrepressible conflict" for another decade. In the meantime, the "attempt to organize a party favorable to secession" took place in the calling of a convention of Southern States to meet in June, 1850, at Nashville, Tennessee.

"The great object of a Southern Convention," wrote Mr. Calhoun on July 9, 1849, to Mr. Collin S. Tarpley of Mississippi, "should be to put forth in a solemn manner the causes of our grievances in an address to the other states, and to admonish them, in a solemn manner, as to the consequences which must follow, if they should not be redressed, and to take measures preparatory to it, in case they should not be. The call should be addressed to all those who are desirous to save the Union

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and our institutions, and who, in the alternative, should it be forced on us, would prefer the latter."

The Southern Convention met at Nashville in June, 1850. Five Southern States were represented. A preamble and resolutions were adopted, which set forth with great vividness and effect the grounds of difference between the people of the South and those of the North in relation to the construction of the Federal Constitution and Slavery. In the preamble occurred these words: "We make no aggressive move. We stand upon the defensive. We invoke the spirit of the Constitution, and claim its guarantees. Our rights, our independence, the peace and existence of our families, depend upon the issue." Among the resolutions was one expressing "cordial attachment to the Constitutional Union of the States," but another declaring that Union to be one of "equal and independent sovereignties," possessing the right to resume the powers delegated to the Federal Government, whenever they deemed it "proper and necessary." There was also a resolution recommending to the Southern States that they meet in a Congress for the purpose of securing the restoration of their Constitutional rights, if possible, or else of providing for "their future safety and independence."

Pending the Compromise Measures in Congress, the Nashville Southern Convention adjourned to reconvene in the following November. Upon its reassembly in Nashville, its numbers were larger, and seven states were now found to be represented. But in the meantime the compromise bills had become laws: and the Southern Convention adjourned, after the adoption of a series of resolutions, that were as

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extraordinary in their detail of the principles animating the men who made them, as they were futile.

"In the public meetings in Talladega County," continues Curry in his narrative of the political events of the period, "I took an active part, and made several speeches.

"Mr. Calhoun died this year, and at a public meeting at the Court House to take proper notice of the great loss, I was on the Committee on Resolutions, and made an address."

During the years of 1851 and 1852 Curry lived quietly on his farm, making an occasional speech at a farmers' meeting, or a Fourth of July oration at a country barbecue. Of an address of the latter kind he takes occasion to record that it "was thoroughly prepared and memorized, without my writing a word." Jackson Curry about this time bought a plantation in Marengo County, and moved thither; whereupon Jabez bought his brother Jackson's farm, which lay only three miles distant from Talladega, and more convenient to his law-office than his own. Settling on this place, he resumed the active practice of the law in Talladega, living there until 1865, when he moved to Marion.

"During these years," he writes, "there was scarcely a night that there were not one or more persons at my house—preachers, relatives, and friends were always welcome."

Of this overflowing and unassuming hospitality, characteristic of the people and country, he makes further mention:—

In the absence of a sufficient supply of preachers, Methodists, Baptists and Presbyterians held "camp-

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meetings." An arbor was built, surrounded by tents rudely constructed of planks. The tent-holders furnished food and lodging, gratuitously and bounteously to all visitors. At the stand or arbor, preaching and other religious services were held during the day and at night. Immense congregations attended. The Baptists held a camp-meeting at Cold Water, a large clear stream of limestone water, on the boundary between Talladega and Calhoun Counties. My father had the largest tent on the ground, and entertained a large number of persons. I attended these meetings every year, and enjoyed them. Distinguished preachers were usually present. While liable to degenerate into physical excitement, the meetings on the whole were productive of good.

In 1852, Curry acted as agent for the Alabama and Tennessee River Railroad Company; and in this capacity traversed the counties of Talladega, Calhoun and Randolph, making speeches, and obtaining rights of way and subscriptions for the road, which was being built from Selma to Rome, via Monticello, Talladega and Jacksonville.

In 1853, he was again a candidate for the State legislature from Talladega County, and was again elected at the head of the poll. The speaker of the House, the Honorable William Garrett, appointed him to the chairmanship of the committee on Internal Improvements. He was also made a member of the committee on Education, and chairman of the House division of a joint committee to examine the accounts of the commissioner and trustee who had been previously designated to "wind up" the State bank and its branches.

A school law, heretofore referred to in an earlier chapter, introduced and championed by Judge Meek,

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that was designed to institute and organize a system of public schools for the State, was enacted. Of its distinguished author, Curry has left the following memorial, written in 1895:—

> Alexander B. Meek, then of Mobile, a brilliant speaker, of large culture, rich, poetic fancy, progressiveness of aim and thought, had the patriotic purpose to develop the minds of Alabama youth. In due time, from his committee on Education, he submitted an able report, accompanied by an elaborate bill, providing for the establishment and maintenance of a system of public schools. After an interesting debate, the bill became a law, and William F. Perry of Talladega was elected Superintendent.

But by far the most interesting and exciting question before the legislature was that of "State aid." Of this Curry writes:—

> My committee reported bills, granting endorsement of railroad bonds, on certain well-defined conditions; and the Governor, John A. Winston, vetoed them. In the controversy, I defended the bills and the principle of well-guarded assistance to internal improvements.

Winston's opposition to State aid for railroads and the reissue of State banknotes as a loan to railroad companies won for him the soubriquet of "the Veto Governor." Curry's influence in the legislature, or other undisclosed causes, served to pass the State aid bills over the Governor's vetoes; but the latter triumphed in the end. The attorney-general of the State stood by the executive in the struggle, and gave an opinion that the acts were unconstitutional; and the treasurer of the State was instructed to make no disbursements under them.

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Winston's attitude was vindicated by his re-election as governor in 1855, and the approbration of his course with reference to "State aid" by the legislature of that year.

For some years the question of a geological survey of Alabama had been agitated, and the relation of geology to agriculture had been discussed. The monumental work of William Barton Rogers, who had organized a survey of Virginia, and of his hardly less distinguished brother, Henry D. Rogers, who had made similar surveys of New Jersey and of Pennsylvania, had for the past two decades attracted attention to the historical geology of the great Appalachian chain; and farseeing men in Alabama beheld with the eyes of prophecy the future that State was destined to have when a full knowledge of her subterranean possessions should be unfolded and disclosed. In 1850, the committee on Education in the State Senate had submitted a bill for a geological survey; but no action was taken upon it. During the session of 1853–54, Curry offered a similar bill in the house, and it was referred to his committee on Internal Improvements. He reported it to the house from the committee, with a written argument in its behalf that was published separately. After considerable opposition the bill became a law. It authorized, among other things, the appointment by the Governor, of a State geologist at a salary of $2,500, whose duty it should be to make a thorough survey, "so as to determine accurately the quality and characteristics of the soil and adaptation to agricultural purposes; the mineral resources, their location, and the best means for their development; the water power and capacities, and generally everything re-

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lating to the geological and agricultural character of the State." It was the modest beginning of a tremendous movement, and contained in it the germ which fructified and bore abundant harvest later in the mines of Alabama, and the furnace fires of Birmingham and her sister cities of a later industrial epoch.

The year 1854 seems by the record to have been a quiet and uneventful one in Curry's personal history. In 1876 he wrote concerning it: "I can now recall nothing of special interest. My farm and profession occupied my time."

In May, 1855, William Curry, his father died; and in his death his son suffered a great loss. Mr. Curry was a man of no inconsiderable wealth, and large popularity. He was liberal and hospitable to a fault; and he was a conscientious and devoted Christian. At the time of his death he was a director of the Alabama and Tennessee River Railway Company; and, in filial affection, his son Jabez preserved among his papers to the day of his death, a copy of the resolutions of respect passed by William Curry's colleagues on the board of directors, May 24, 1855.

In proportion as the preceding year had seemed to him dull and uneventful, Curry found that of 1855 crowded to the brim with action and excitement. Writing of the time more than a generation later, he says:—

> The years 1854–1855 will be long remembered for the origin, unparalleled growth and complete overthrow of the American or Know-Nothing Party. It was a secret political organization, with degrees or orders of membership, and a ritual of initiation. Strong oaths were administered to persons admitted. The party suddenly

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became very popular. Lodges were organized, in nearly every neighborhood, village, town and city in the United States. So strong was the organization, it became presumptuous and intolerant of opposition. The leading object was to cultivate an intense Americanism, and exclude aliens from suffrage, and Roman Catholics from office. Nearly all the Whigs and many Democrats were beguiled into the party, which encountered its first and most serious opposition in Virginia, where Henry A. Wise, the democratic candidate for governor, made one of the most brilliant and effective campaigns ever made in the United States. In many other States the excitement was high; in none, more than in Alabama. In spite of many friendly warnings as to my self-inflicted political immolation, I was, from the beginning to the end, inflexibly opposed to the secret party and its principles. The death of my father and the settlement of his estate made it proper for me to decline candidacy for any office; but on July 3, 1855, I was by a county convention unanimously nominated for the legislative house of representatives. The convention was preceded by a large and tumultuous and sanguine assemblage of the opposition; and the leading speaker, in anticipation of my nomination, congratulated his party on the glory it would have in defeating "the Ajax Telamon of the Democracy." Having apparently no option, I accepted the nomination; and from that day until the election on the first Monday in August I traveled and spoke every day, except Sundays. The Know-Nothings never doubted of success; and I had to meet in debate Lewis E. Parsons, a knightly antagonist, one of the ablest lawyers in the State, a thorough gentleman, afterwards governor by presidential appointment, and Hon. Thomas B. Woodward, who had been a member of the Nullification Convention in South Carolina, and was the brother of Joseph A. Woodward, a leading member of Congress from South Carolina, and who participated with others

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in the canvass. The crowds were large, and the debates warm and excited. Several times I spoke in face of threats of personal violence. Having obtained one of the little "yellow books" (which I now possess) containing the oaths and ritual, I used them unsparingly. I rode on horseback to our various appointments, and never more enjoyed intellectual encounters. My whole ticket was elected, I leading the poll, receiving a majority of 2,550. I was on the day of the election thirty miles from the Court House, and rode that night on horseback, reaching the Square about 2 A.M., to be received by as glad and enthusiastic an assemblage as ever rejoiced over an election. Letters came from prominent men, in various parts of the State, warmly congratulating me, as Talladega from the ability of the Know-Nothing candidates was one of the chief battle fields in the State.

The Know-Nothing party was, as stated by Curry, a secret organization, the chief plank of whose platform was "America for Americans." It masqueraded behind mystic symbolism, and the paraphernalia of ritual ceremony. It had supreme lodges and subordinate lodges, and degrees, and grips and passwords. It had appeared first in 1852; when, as is often the case with embryo political organizations, it contented itself with interrogating the candidates of other parties. Its secret name at first was "The Sons of '76, or the Order of the Star-Spangled Banner." Later it became "The National Council of the United States of North America." Its derisive nickname by those who vainly interrogated its members as to its program and significance, only to receive the reply, "I don't know," was that of "Know-Nothings." It largely supplanted the Whig party in the South and Southwest. After an overwhelming and crushing defeat at the

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hands of the Virginia democracy, under the leadership of Wise in the gubernatorial campaign of 1855, its power began to wane, and its members deserted it, as rats leave a sinking ship. In spite of its loudly vaunted Americanism, it was distinctly un-American in its proscription for religious principle, and in its organization as a political party upon a basis of secrecy. Its members, abandoning both of these un-American dogmas, finally merged in the Constitutional Union party, which nominated and supported Bell and Everett in the portentous presidential election of 1860.

Curry's innate spirit of hostility to any political proscription chimed in with his established principles of democracy in this contest; and his triumphant campaign, which culminated in his enthusiastic reception in the late hours of election night by his excited and elated supporters, had been won with an energy and an eloquence that had been as effective as they were sincere.

The legislature met in the State House at Montgomery in December, 1855. The Speaker, Richard W. Walker, was not only a political but a personal friend of Curry's; and he again became chairman of the Committee on Internal Improvements, and also retained his place on the committee on Education, and on the joint committee to examine and audit the accounts of the Bank Commissioner. During this session he made speeches on subjects of internal improvement, on the proper disposition of the bills of the State bank, and on the American party. The last was in reply to the Honorable C. C. Langdon of Mobile; and created so unusual and distinct an impression for ability and eloquence upon its hearers,

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that its publication was requested by every democratic member of the house. Its author, however, with characteristic modesty, declined the proffered request; and the speech, like many other unusual and unreported specimens of human eloquence, passed into the limbo of forgetfulness.

The geological bill, which in the preceding session had become a law, continued an object of interest and improvement with him; and a report upon it and its operations, from his committee on Internal Improvements, written and presented by him, and of which a thousand copies were printed and circulated in the State, emphasized its importance, and added vitality and effect to its provisions.

He had been a delegate from his county to the State democratic conventions of 1847 and 1852; and he was again elected to that of 1856, whose function it was, among others, to choose delegates to the National Democratic Convention, which met in Cincinnati, June 2 of that year, and nominated Buchanan and Breckinridge on a strict-construction platform, which included a condemnation of Know-Nothingism, an approval of the Kansas-Nebraska bill, and the substitution of what its adversaries called "Squatter Sovereignty" in place of the provisions of the Missouri Compromise.

All these doctrines were highly acceptable to Curry, who belonged to the school of Calhoun democracy, the members of which dominated the convention. He was made a presidential elector on the State democratic ticket of that year.

"I canvassed the district thoroughly," he writes of his own part in the campaign, "and spoke also in Selma and Marion. I received the highest vote of any of the elec-

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tors; and went to Montgomery to meet the Electoral College and cast the vote of the State for Mr. Buchanan."

His personal and political popularity, extending from his county, in which, in three successive legislative campaigns, he had led the poll as a candidate, was now illustrated in the State at large in the fact which he so modestly states, that he "received the highest vote of any of the electors." This popularity, when first evidenced, was attributed by him to his "small size, his youthful appearance, and the popularity of his father." As a matter of fact, it was undoubtedly due to his powers as a popular orator, and to his equipment as a well-informed politician of pleasing address, of profound convictions, of frank expression, and of great energy and enterprise. Of himself at this period he writes:—

Nominally practising law, I attended to my farm and read much of politics and miscellaneous literature. I desired to prepare myself to be a statesman, and my reading was largely in that line.

Besides his other work, already noticed, he wrote at this time a great deal for the newspapers. His close connection with the Talladega *Watchtower*, which had begun soon after his return from Harvard, continued; and in 1856, nearly all of the *Watchtower* editorials were from his pen. He says:—

"I wrote much for the above paper, and became a tolerable printer, and an expert proof-reader. Reading proof I consider a valuable part of my education."

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CHAPTER VII

"BLEEDING KANSAS"

In the fall of 1856 occurred the Presidential election, with the extension or restoration of slavery in the Territories, the burning question of the hour. Buchanan and Breckinridge, the democratic candidates, were elected over the opposing Know-Nothing and Republican tickets, whose nominees were respectively Millard Fillmore and Andrew Jackson Donelson on the former, and John C. Fremont and William L. Dayton on the latter. The democratic ticket received 174 electoral votes; that of the Republican party 114, and the Know-Nothing candidates 8. Buchanan and Breckinridge were inaugurated March 4, 1857; and the Supreme Court of the United States rendered its opinion in the Dred Scott case two days later. It is significant of the inflamed condition of the public mind on the question of slavery, that although this case had been decided in 1856, the great tribunal which had determined it thought it best to withhold its opinion until the excitement of the Presidential election should have subsided.

In May, 1857, a democratic convention for the Congressional district in Alabama, which included Talladega, met in that town, and nominated Curry for Congress, his competitor, Colonel Griffin, retiring after hearing two of Curry's speeches in the canvass.

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The democratic candidate made political addresses in every county in his district, although without opposition, in the effort as he states "to instruct the people on grave political issues and the character of the government."

After the election in November, Curry, with his family, consisting of his wife, two children, and a servant, went to Washington, and took rooms at the Ebbitt House, where his kinsman, L. Q. C. Lamar, then a member from Mississippi, and several colleagues from Alabama, were established. Alabama in this session was represented in the lower house by James A. Stallworth, Eli S. Slater, James F. Dowdell, Sydenham Moore, George S. Houston, Williamson R. W. Cobb, and J. L. M. Curry. The Senators were Clement C. Clay, Jr., and Benjamin Fitzpatrick.

Congress met on the 7th of December, with a substantial democratic majority in both houses, although in the preceding Presidential election there had been no popular majority for any one of the three tickets in the field; and Fremont would have been elected if Pennsylvania and Illinois had voted Republican. But the breach had not yet come in the democracy between the Douglas democrats, and those who upheld the doctrines of Calhoun under the leadership of Breckinridge and Yancey and Toombs and Davis,—a breach that divided the great political organization and lit the fires of civil war four years later in the ascendancy of the young Republican party. In the Senate there were 39 Democrats, 20 Republicans and 5 Know-Nothings. In the House the Democratic membership numbered 131, the Republican 92, and the Know-Nothings 14. James

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L. Orr of South Carolina was elected Speaker; and Curry was assigned to the unimportant committee on Revolutionary claims, whose membership nevertheless included three other important personages in Owen Lovejoy, of Illinois, Henry L. Dawes, of Massachusetts, and Samuel S. Cox, of Ohio, later of New York. Lovejoy, the fanatic and fiery abolitionist, had been moved twenty years before by the murder of his brother, Elijah P. Lovejoy, at the hands of a mob in Alton, Illinois, to espouse the anti-slavery cause, which he advocated thenceforth with an energy, an eloquence, and a relentlessness that made him conspicuous among its restless and resistless protagonists. Dawes, like Curry, was serving his first term. He succeeded Charles Sumner as Senator from Massachusetts, and held conspicuous position in the affairs of the country for a period long subsequent to the close of the War between the States. Cox had been a newspaper editor, in which position he had achieved the soubriquet of "Sunset" from a glowing and iridescent quality of his editorials, combined with the initials of his name. He was a voluminous writer and an effective and humorous speaker.

Curry makes record of the fact that his Revolutionary Claims Committee had little work to do. Nevertheless, he sought and found other opportunities for work; and on the 10th of February, 1858, he made his first appearance on the floor in the presentation of a memorial of the General Assembly of Alabama in favor of the establishment of an armory in Shelby County, which was referred to the Committee on Military Affairs, and ordered to be printed. In the light of later events, it seems a significant and

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a most ominous act; but there is nothing to show that Curry, in presenting the wishes of his State in the premises, had any anticipation of the early subsequent need of armories in the South.

Two weeks later, on the 23rd of February, he made his first set speech in the House. It was in the course of the Kansas debate and upon the Kansas question.

It was such a speech as one would expect from a young Alabamian of that day, fervid, intense, defiant and thrilling with the conviction that abolition meant economic and social ruin to the people of his section. He was speaking from the heart when he shouted in this maiden speech:—

> With a like spirit, in total disregard of human suffering, John Quincy Adams, with all the fervor of hate and fanaticism, on the floor of the House, in 1844, gave utterance to the sentiment: "Let the abolition of slavery come; by whatever means—by blood or otherwise—let it come." If it did come, commerce would languish, factories would stop, banks would suspend, credit would expire, and universal woe would brood over this land. The fearful panic now upon us has impaired confidence, produced ruin and distress, bankrupted individuals and corporations, diminished trade, and inflicted losses from which twenty years will not recover us; and yet these consequences are trivial and insignificant compared with the sudden destruction of two thousand millions of property, the uprooting of social institutions, and the perishing of a nation. The sirocco's blast, the tornado's sweep, the earthquake's heavings, the ravages of the pestilence, faintly foreshadow the appalling desolation which would ensue upon such a catastrophe.

The story of what came to be known in the political parlance of the period as "Bleeding Kansas" is

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as full of bitterness and woe as a Greek tragedy. The very name reeks with the evil memories of border ruffianism, of intolerance, of the ferocity of human hate growing out of a quasi-moral political question, of Lecompton constitutions and Topeka conventions, while above all looms the fanatical and sinister figure of "Ossawatomie" Brown.

Kansas for a number of years had been the battle-ground between the extension and the restriction of slavery. As the territory had advanced towards a condition which entitled it to statehood, the contest had increased in violence. The opponents of either side were constantly up and doing. The abolitionists of New England poured into the Territory their hordes of subsidized colonists. The slave-holding Missourians sent bands of pro-slavery settlers with guns in their hands. With an eagerness that epitomized the rapidly crystallizing sentiment of the two diverging sections of the Republic, the two sides sought to possess themselves of the coming state.

Curry writes of the situation:—

> Douglas of Illinois and the Democrats, to get rid of what was called the "Wilmot Proviso," sought to flank the question by leaving it to the people to regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States. Another question afterwards arose, whether the "inhabitants of a territory while in territorial pupilage could abolish slavery," or must that question be determined by the "people" assembled in convention to frame a constitution, their organic law.

Both parties in Kansas had framed constitutions, the anti-slavery men at Topeka, in October, 1855, and the pro-slavery men in October, 1857; and both

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parties were seeking the admission of Kansas as a state of the Union, each under its respective constitution. Curry favored its admission as a state "with or without slavery, as the constitution may require," but in no uncertain attitude as to which constitution he preferred.

"The rejection of Kansas, with the Lecompton Constitution," he said, "speaks the dissolution of, or sectionalizes the Democratic party, which is the strongest ligament that binds the Union together. It will be the unmistakable annunciation that no more slave States are to be admitted into this Union; that the South is to be degraded and reduced to inferiority; that there is to be no extension of her limits, no enlargement of her boundaries; that slavery shall be restricted with constantly narrowing confines; that for her, within this Union, there is to be no future but bleak, gloomy, hopeless despair."

He dwelt upon "the lamentable results" of abolition, as it was sought to be effected; and he expressed his profound "conviction of the importance of the question, and the magnitude of the interests involved." He declared that he but echoed the sentiment of his State, as authoritatively expressed by her General Assembly, and proclaimed his determination to follow her lead.

"I will not anticipate her course," he continued; "but recognizing to its fullest extent the right of secession, and owing to her my allegiance and fealty, when she calls I will respond; where she goes I will go; her people shall be my people, and her destiny my destiny."

Thus, in the simple eloquence of scriptural phraseology, he voiced the political creed of the

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democrats of the school of strict construction from Mr. Jefferson and Randolph of Roanoke and George Mason, down through Calhoun and Tyler to Breckinridge and Jefferson Davis, with a clearness and a courage characteristic alike of the man and of the times. The battle call of the abolitionists for three decades had been "secession," not on account of the Constitution, but of slavery. Wendell Phillips of Massachusetts had said at a meeting in Boston, in May, 1849, "We confess that we intend to trample under foot the constitution of this country." And later he declared:—

"There is merit in the Republican party. It is this: It is the first sectional party ever organized in this country. * * * It is not national; it is sectional. It is the North arrayed against the South. * * * The first crack in the iceberg is visible; you will yet hear it go with a crack through the centre."

William Lloyd Garrison had demanded in his paper, *The Liberator*, in September, 1855, "a Northern Confederacy, with no Union with slave-holders"; and in the same paper of June 20, 1856, had denounced the United States Constitution as "a covenant with death and a league with hell." Rev. O. B. Frothingham, in the May of the preceding year, had said: "He believed that this Union effectually prevented them from advancing in the least degree the work of the slave's redemption. . . . As to the word 'Union,' they all knew it was a political catchword."

Curry, to whom the compact theory of our government seemed irrefutable, was ready for secession because of a violated constitution, whose violation

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concluded its pact, and because he believed that that constitution itself, in reserving to the State the powers not expressly delegated to the Union, reserved to it the right, when it saw fit, to end its connection with the Union, in the exercise of its unquestionable sovereignty. That slavery itself was a thing to be gotten rid of, he doubtless held then, as many other southern Democrats held, who yet supported it as a social institution that had become so inextricably interwoven with the fabric of the body politic, as to be incapable of release save by the fatal operation called Cæsarian. Though in his later years his views of slavery became, in the light of time and experience greatly modified, and he found himself "glad that it is gone," and wondered "that I and others should have ever sanctioned and defended it," no subsequent event ever abated one jot or tittle of his faith in the strict construction of the Constitution, and in the doctrine of the rights of the States, with which the tremendously difficult question of slavery was so intimately and apparently inextricably involved. State sovereignty and the right of secession were boldly proclaimed and ably championed in this first speech of his in the halls of Congress. He came at last, as most others of his day and creed came, to accept the judgment of arms upon the question of secession; but his belief in the strict construction of the Constitution and the reserved rights of the States, as has been said, abode with him as part of his political creed, and he remained a Jeffersonian Democrat unto the last.

"In the light of subsequent experience, quite apart from constitutional questions," he wrote in his commonplace book forty years afterwards with a significant

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maintenance of the integrity of his political thinking, "I put here on record my gratitude that Kansas was not cursed with the institution of African slavery."

This sentiment was a reasonable expression of the feeling that had animated Mr. Jefferson when he sought to incorporate into the Declaration of Independence a protest against the continuance of the slave trade, and to write into the "Ordinance of 'Eighty-seven" the prohibition of slavery in the Northwest Territory; that had made John Marshall the first President of the Colonization Society of Virginia; that had caused George Mason, in the Virginia Convention of 1788, having under consideration the adoption of the Federal Constitution, to denounce that clause of it which permitted the importation of slaves for twenty years; and that induced General Robert E. Lee and a host of other Southerners to manumit their slaves. The right of secession, advocated by the thoughtful southern *ante-bellum* Democrat, was advocated for the sake of constitutional liberty; and not, as in the case, at least, of the more violent northern abolitionist, on account of slavery.

Curry's speech in the Kansas debate was listened to with marked interest and attention by his Congressional auditors, and it was widely circulated in printed form throughout the South. Greeley, in the *Tribune*, recognized its ability, and pronouncing it "a strong speech," said of its author: "He is certainly a powerful addition to the pro-slavery side of the House."

Curry's habits of life at this time were characteristic of the man, and go far toward explaining his success in Congress as well as in his subsequent

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career. He was a regular attendant at the E Street Baptist Church, whose pastor was Dr. Samson, President of Columbian College. An acquaintance thus began between the two men, which ripened through succeeding years into a valuable friendship. Through the influence of President Samson, Curry was invited to address the students of the College. The audience assembled in the Smithsonian building; and he had the gratification of seeing among his auditors the President of the United States, Mr. Buchanan; General Lewis Cass, who had been a nominee of the national democratic party for the Presidential office; and Professor Joseph Henry, whose work as a physicist has left him a greater fame than that of more than one President of the Union; and whose splendid biography is epitomized in that of a later great physicist no less famous, who said of Henry that "he never engaged in an investigation or an enterprise which was to put a dollar into his own pocket, but aimed only at the general good of the world."

Curry's devotion during this session of Congress to the duties of his office was diligent and conscientious. He was punctual in attendance, and alert and painstaking in his attention to the public matters which came before the House. In addition, he makes record that "business before the departments was plentiful; and correspondence was heavy; but by preventing accumulation of work, I was never behind, and rarely pressed. In those days members of Congress had no clerks."

During this session a bill was introduced granting pensions to the soldiers of the War of 1812. Curry, with the well-grounded principles of the strict con-

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struction Democrat of the day, opposed it with vigor and ability.

"No measure," he said later, "so satisfied me of the general want of moral courage on the part of Representatives. . . . Congress now yields readily to any pension claim, whether supported or not by valid proof. Then the House in Committee of the Whole, always defeated the measure; but when the Yeas and Nays were called, the vote was different. Elihu Washburn, John Sherman, and Winter Davis among the Republicans, had the courage of their convictions, and recorded themselves in the negative."

Convinced of the inexpediency and fundamental wrong of a system, which has since that time fastened itself with resistless and appalling power upon the Government, he opposed the Pension Bill in an elaborate speech on the floor of the House of Representatives. In this speech, which was made on April 27, 1858, he pointed out the extravagant provisions of the bill, and demonstrated the social, political and economic evils that may be expected to flow from the establishment and continuance of a system of pensions in a democratic government. The speech demonstrates the results of an extended investigation and study of the subject, both in an historical and political-economic direction; and Curry himself subsequently regarded it as one of the best he ever made. "Some whispers of discontent," he says, "were heard in my district; but my constituents had the good sense to approve."

As an incident of this period of his life, he mentions with interest the fact of hearing Adelina Patti sing. She was then but little more than a child, being scarcely seventeen; but she had already long been

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a familiar object of admiration and delight to the music-loving public of two hemispheres, that she had charmed with her beauty, grace and artistic skill. Curry, in making mention of the incident some twenty years later, says: "She was a young girl, but gave abundant prophecy of her present fame."

The session of Congress continued until June 1, 1858; and Curry and his family went home to spend the vacation, which lasted until the reassembling on December 6, 1858. Again the Pension Bill came to the front; and though apparently of almost insignificant consequence in comparison with the mighty subjects of which men's minds and hearts were full, afforded in itself a theme for the expression of that constitutional interpretation about which the larger questions of slavery and abolition revolved. He was promulgating sound doctrine from the democratic standpoint, and that, so just, that political adversaries like Henry Winter Davis could take occasion to commend his position, when he said in further debate on the bill:—

> It is said by gentlemen upon this floor that no argument as to the expense is an argument as to the merits of the bill. I take a different position. Sir, when you propose to tax the people of this country for the purpose of conferring a gratuity upon men who are not disabled, not needy, not objects of charity,—for this bill does not discriminate between the wealthy and the necessitous—then I contend that it is a legitimate line of argument to inquire into the expense under this bill, and to hold up to public view and observation the enormous amount which will be required to execute it.

His legislative efforts as a Congressman were all in the direction of seeking to administer the govern-

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ment economically, prudently, and with due regard to constitutional restriction. On January 13, 1859, he offered a resolution, which was agreed to, requiring the Secretary of the Navy to furnish detailed information concerning the Navy Chaplains appointed since 1813. The act seemed to be to ascertain whether any attempt was being made to subject non-Episcopal Chaplains to Episcopal forms; or whether in the religious practices of the American Navy there might be any suggestion of a violation of the spirit of constitutional freedom, which had found its great inception in the United States in Jefferson's immortal statute.

Toward the latter part of the month of January, 1859, he participated in the then pending Consular and Diplomatic Appropriation Bill, asserting an economical and democratic attitude against the sinecures and pretensions of ministers to unimportant foreign courts, and proposing to reduce expense and curtail patronage by reducing the number of foreign ministers.

"My opposition to some, not all, of these measures," he declared, "grows out of the fact of their unnecessary expense and their conceded uselessness."

It is believed that no vote of his can be found recorded that did not favor, as opportunity occurred, a reduction in the number of offices, and a cutting down of appropriations. On February 2, 1859, when the Legislation Appropriation Bill was under discussion, he came to the front with a proposition to reduce expenses by putting an end to the publication of the Congressional Debates. Undismayed by memories of the reports of the legislative discussions

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which had for so many years engaged the talents of Seaton and Gales, and to the abridgment of which Thomas H. Benton had not disdained to apply his great industry and ability, Curry attacked the bill by moving to strike out an item of $49,333.32 for printing the Congressional Globe, and for binding the same; and the further item of $18,046, "for reporting proceedings." He admitted that he had very little hope of the motion being adopted, but said he made it in entirely good faith. He regarded the publication of the debates of the House as useless and costly; they crowded the mails, and were never read.

"I believe there is no expenditure of this Government so useless and worthless," he declared, "as that for the publication of the Congressional Globe. . . . I do not propose to object to paying for what has already been done, but I propose to put a stop to future expenses of this kind."

On the next day he made another speech against the system of printing and distributing the speeches of the House. "The truth is," he asserted, "that with few exceptions, they are made that they may be printed and not that they may be read."

A few days later, Mr. Francis P. Blair of Missouri moved the purchase of one hundred copies of Benton's Abridgment of the Debates of Congress, for the use of the Congressional Library and the libraries of the two houses. Mr. Garnett of Virginia opposed the resolution, because he thought it "wrong in principle," and later he found and expressed other reasons of opposition. Others took part in the discussion; and Curry moved to amend Mr. Blair's

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resolution by adding, "one hundred copies of Appleton's edition of Calhoun's Works."

Mr. Phelps of Missouri rose to a point of order: "I submit," said he, "that the amendment of the gentleman from Alabama is out of order." The point of order was overruled; and Curry said:—

I have not examined Benton's abridgment of the debates sufficiently to test their fidelity and accuracy. I have, however, purchased a copy for my own library. But, sir, I have to say that if it is as full of prejudice, and I had almost said of malignity, as his "Thirty Years in the Senate," I think it ought to be burned by the common hangman. However that may be, if Congress intends by this special piece of favoritism to purchase Benton's Abridgment, I think they ought to purchase, at least by way of antidote, Calhoun's Works.

To this Mr. Clark of Missouri replied:—

I am opposed to the amendment of the gentleman from Alabama. It is with great regret, indeed, that I have heard the gentleman allow himself to pronounce upon this great work of the country as he has done. Sir, Colonel Benton's Abridgment of the Debates of Congress is a great national work. Most gentlemen present have examined it, and will bear me witness that it is marked with the strictest fidelity and accuracy. I admit that Mr. Benton had his partialities, but they were not stronger than those of the favorite of the gentleman from Alabama, Mr. Calhoun. They were rivals, and have had their day. Both were great men of the country; but their works are widely different.

Mr. Cochrane of New York thereupon injected into the merry war of books and words this query:—

I desire to ask the gentleman from Alabama whether

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Mr. Calhoun's Works are not already in the library of Congress?

Curry replied: "They are, and I hope gentlemen will read them and improve their politics"; to which Mr. McQueen of South Carolina added: "I will say to the gentleman that Mr. Benton's work is also there."

Curry's amendment was lost; and the incident, trivial in itself, is related merely for the sake of illustrating and emphasizing that dominant and significant characteristic, which lasted him through life, of losing no opportunity, however small, of seeking to impress his convictions concerning political or moral righteousness and truth upon the minds of those with whom he came in contact.

On February 24, 1859, he made an extended speech on expenditures and the tariff, advocating the democratic doctrine of "retrenchment and economy," and inveighing against "onerous taxes," and the injustice and unconstitutionality of a "protective" tariff. The closing sentence of this speech is worthy of quotation, as an epitome of the political doctrines of the State-rights democracy of the period:—

> Sir, there is virtue, power, victory, invincibility yet in Democratic principles; but to secure and merit success there must be a self-lustration and a speedy return to the rigid State-rights and free-trade principles of John Taylor, and Jefferson, of Polk and Pierce, of Calhoun and Woodbury. On such alone can the Government be safely administered, and on such alone depend our security and prosperity.

It was the voice of one, invoking in the wilderness, among others more distinguished, the now almost

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forgotten names and obsolete political philosophy of John Taylor of Caroline, the Virginian, and of Levi Woodbury, the great defender of the Independent Treasury System, and "the rock of New England democracy."

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CHAPTER VIII

A FIRST AND LAST ALLEGIANCE

"When Congress met in December, 1859," Curry makes record at a later period, "the two parties, Democratic and Republican, were nearly balanced, a handful of 'Americans' holding the control. John Sherman and Thomas S. Bocock were the Republican and Democratic candidates for Speaker, and neither could get the required majority. During the autumn John Brown had made his incendiary raid into Virginia, and had been arrested, tried and hung. The North generally sympathized with the fanatical felon. One Richard Rowan Helper of North Carolina had published a pamphlet on Slavery, unjust to the South, which Republican members had endorsed and circulated. Passions were much inflamed. Sectional issues were assuming shape, and sectionalizing parties. The elements were brewing for a gigantic and bloody contest. During the ballotings while the Clerk presided, many inflammatory speeches were made; and there were very nearly several times, personal collisions. On December 10th, I spoke on the Progress of Anti-slaveryism, trying to present a calm and philosophical view of the subject. My speech, temperate in language but firm and argumentative, was widely copied, and I received many letters asking for copies."

The times were out of joint, and temperance of thought and speech were ceasing to dominate men's minds. Slavery, which had agitated the country for more than two decades, as the subject of political discussion, and around which as an object revolved

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great questions of constitutional construction and interpretation, was now not only a burning but a flaming issue. Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe had written, and her publishers had printed and circulated in America more than half a million copies of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," the most ingenious and powerful political pamphlet in its effect ever composed in the western hemisphere. Judge Taney and a majority of the Supreme Court had decided the Dred Scott case in favor of the pursuing master and against the recalcitrant slave in the free-state, and Benjamin R. Curtis, one of the ablest of the many able jurisprudents of New England, had delivered a dissenting opinion in the same great case, which had given pause to the purpose and daunted the intellectual courage of many of the most thoughtful pro-slavery advocates; Hinton R. Helper, a non-slave holding Southerner, had stirred the passions and inflamed the hearts of the North with a mighty exposition of the wrongs experienced by the poor white man of the South by reason of negro-slavery, in his "Impending Crisis," a complementary and more bitter indictment of slavery even than Mrs. Stowe's book; "Bleeding Kansas" had held the centre of the political stage in a passionate and ferocious struggle over two constitutions; and out of it John Brown had emerged in the darkness of abolition secrecy, with his murderous pikes of "freedom" in the hands of his fugitive slave-followers; and had been captured in his assault upon the United States Government Arsenal at Harper's Ferry by Federal troops, and hung for treason and inciting insurrection, by the authorities of the Commonwealth of Virginia. The quasi-moral question

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of slavery, injected into the political body of the times had served, as such questions in politics invariably serve, to stir the fiercest and most elemental passions of men. Against the abolition slogan, that because of slavery the Federal Constitution was "a league with death and a covenant with hell," the strict construction South continued to chant its bold appeal to the Constitution itself. "After all, it is not the Union—the Union alone upon which the reflecting man of this country bases his hopes and rests his affections. With him the Union is secondary in importance to the principles it was designed to perpetuate and establish," was the thought of the Cotton States democrat, as voiced a short time before by a representative from Curry's own State. The "irrepressible conflict" loomed portentous and dreadful in the almost immediate future.

In Curry's speech, above referred to, made on the floor of the House five days after its meeting on December 5th, 1859, he enlarged upon the desperate temper of the times, the tremendous growth of abolition sentiment, and the logical and inevitable results to flow from existing conditions:—

"If I may be allowed to make a personal allusion," he said, "in 1844 I myself stood in Faneuil Hall, and heard a speech of James G. Birney, the Liberty-party candidate for the Presidency, when there was hardly a baker's dozen present to share with him his liberty-loving sentiments; and some of those who were there were, like myself, attracted from curiosity to hear a speech upon such a subject from a candidate for such a position. It is thus that anti-slaveryism has swelled, enlarged, and grown, until at the last presidential election, a mere political adventurer, unknown to the multitude, without

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political antecedents, received one million four hundred thousand votes in Northern States. And yet you tell us, the distinguished gentleman from Ohio (Mr. Corwin) told us, that we need not have any apprehension or feel any special alarm."

Curry's characterization of John C. Frémont is scarcely consistent with his boast of the temperance to be found in the language of this speech. Frémont was already a distinguished man, even though an "adventurer" in the lofty sense of the word, when the young Republican party of the country had made him its standard-bearer in 1856; and had, independent of his "adventures," by that strange magic that often moves the minds of democracies, outside of political principles, won the hearts of many of the old Jacksonian Democrats by winning the hand of Jessie Benton, the daughter of the stout Missourian who had, independent and alone, in the earlier days of the century carried his "expunging resolutions" in the United States Senate, and wiped from the august record of that body the condemnation of his great chieftain, Andrew Jackson. Yet, after all is said, under the influence of those compelling days the one million four hundred thousand votes for Frémont in the Northern States in 1856 would have been given for a graven image, standing for what he stood for.

"Damn you, sir," said John Randolph of Roanoke, in response to the proffered thanks from the hustings of one of his neighbors for whom as a party candidate he had just voted, and to whom he had declined to speak for twenty years, "I am not voting for you, but for the Democratic party."

Curry's prognosis was correct, however intem-

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perate his description of Frémont; and it was all in vain to his prophetic soul that Corwin and his compeers proclaimed "Peace! peace!" when there was no peace. He saw with the clearness of vision, that was not given to all who thought as he thought, to see, that "the vitalizing, animating principle of the Republican party is opposition to slavery." But with this clarity of foresight, he perceived none the less the other side,—the grave alternative,—equally clearly; and portrayed that perception, and his allegiance to its consequences, with the high courage that he never failed, when needful, to exhibit.

"Every separate community," he continued, "must be able to protect itself. Power must be met by power. If the majority can control this government, interpreting the Constitution at its will, then this government is a despotism. Whether wise or unwise, whether merciful or cruel, it is a despotism still.

"Mr. Clerk, this power of self-protection, according to my judgment and my theory of politics, resides in each State. Each has the right of secession, the right of interposition, for the arrest of evils within its limits.

. . .

"Mr. Clerk, if our . . . friends . . . (in Congress) . . . be not able to interpose for the security of the South, and for the preservation of the Constitution, I, for one, shall counsel immediate and effective resistance, and shall urge the people to fling themselves upon the reserved rights and the inalienable sovereignty of the State to which I owe my first and last allegiance." (Applause.)

The tension of the times was indicated in the fierce and protracted struggle over the Speakership of the House, which continued for eight weeks before

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a Speaker was finally chosen. The Republicans had a plurality over the Democrats, but the Know-Nothings held the balance of power. John Sherman of Ohio, the Republican candidate for Speaker, and Thomas S. Bocock of Virginia, the Democratic candidate, were appropriate and fit representatives of their respective parties on the great issue; and the debates, that at times grew from anger to ferocity, circled about the John Brown raid and Helper's abolitionist "Impending Crisis." Sherman came at one time within three votes of election; but both he and Bocock failed in the conclusion, and William Pennington, of New Jersey, a moderate Republican, was elected to the Speakership. Sherman became later one of the most distinguished leaders of his party; while Bocock was, in 1861, elected a member of the first Congress of the Confederate States, and upon its permanent organization became its Speaker.

A short time before his death in 1903, Curry, in allusion to what he calls "a pleasant correspondence and interview with Mr. Edwards Pierrepont, our Minister to England," growing out of his speech above referred to, and doubtless in extenuation of its note of certainty, says:—

> In after years, the decade having passed, I sent him (Mr. Pierrepont) a speech made before the Georgia legislature, in which I said that the man or woman, who assumed to understand and provide an adequate remedy for the negro problem was a fanatic *or* a fool. In reply he asked leave to amend by striking out "*or*" and inserting "*and.*"

"Southern members," wrote Curry, in 1876, concerning these stirring events, "were generally too violent and personally denunciatory. Some attained a cheap

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newspaper notoriety by attacks on Northern representatives; and, I doubt not, enhanced the cruelties of the war, as many of those representatives remembered the bitter words, and thirsted for revenge."

He concludes his account of the struggle over the Speakership, in which as a democratic teller, he kept the tally-sheet of the votes, with the statement that Governor Pennington, the successful candidate, was "a weak old man," and "had no qualifications for the position."

In the appointment of committees, Curry was put on that of Naval Affairs, the chairman of which was Mr. Schuyler Colfax of Indiana; "and was thus," he says, "thrown into pleasant relations with such officers as Buchanan, Dahlgren, Magruder, etc."

Curry's fame as a debater on the floor of the House became well established during this time; and when a resolution of censure against the President was introduced in that body, growing out of the sale of Fort Snelling, Mr. Buchanan sent for Curry and desired him to undertake his defense against the accusation contained in the resolution. This Curry made ready to do; and the notes for his speech prepared for the occasion, but never used, because the matter was not pressed, were found among his papers after his death.

On February 16, 1860, he submitted a resolution, that was unanimously agreed to, instructing the Committee on Accounts to inquire into the expediency of some additional legislation securing greater accountability and economy in the disbursement of the contingent fund. With a high sense of his representative responsibility, he remained a "watch-dog of the Treasury" during his whole stay in Con-

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gress. He was ever eager in seeking the enforcement of an economic administration of the government, so long as he remained in it and of it, which he nevertheless showed himself ready to abandon, and if necessary to destroy, for the sake of a fundamental principle.

On March 14, following, he addressed the House on the Constitutional Rights of the States in the Territories, discussing Slavery, State Sovereignty, the powers of Congress in the Territories, "Squatter Sovereignty," and all the host of incidental matters that garnish the history of that tremendous epoch.

"African slavery," he said, "is now a great fact—a political, social, industrial, humanitarian fact. Its chief product is 'King,' and freights northern vessels, drives northern machinery, feeds northern laborers, and clothes the entire population. Northern no less than Southern capital and labor are dependent in great degree upon it; and these results were wholly unanticipated by the good men who are so industriously persuaded as clouds of witnesses against the institution."

He spoke of it, and thought of it, and maintained it, and fortified it as an "institution," with the logic and the eloquence of profound and patriotic conviction; deeming it as Mr. Calhoun described it: "What is called slavery is, in reality, a political institution, essential to the peace, safety and prosperity of those States of the Union in which it exists." Before he was ten years older Curry utterly abandoned this theory of slavery and came to regard it as an economic curse from which Southern society was happily relieved.

In his speech of March 14 he exhibited an unusual power of eloquence and ability; and at the end of

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his hour, his time was extended by unanimous consent, in order that he might go on. He continued for some while longer, with an address of ever growing vigor and force, which found its peroration in a stirring allusion to the refusal of the Republican party to admit Kansas into the Union under the Lecompton constitution.

This speech attracted especial attention to him as one of the ablest of the Southern representatives in Congress; and was so disturbing in its effects upon the Douglas, or "Anti-Lecompton" Democrats, of whom there were then the ill-boding number of thirteen in the House, that the Mobile *Register*, the leading Douglas newspaper in the South, edited by the Honorable John Forsythe, devoted eight or ten successive articles to an elaborate reply.

A slight incident in a man's career will often serve to illustrate his character more than many of his most ambitious acts. On June 4, 1860, Curry opposed the payment to the grandchildren of a certain Revolutionary officer of a sum of money that had been voted him by Congress, but not paid. He said: "I have examined a great many of these Revolutionary claims, and I have never found a just one yet." His idea seemed to be that of the Texas judge, who replied, to the plea of the young lawyer defending the criminal, to the effect that it was better for ninety-nine guilty men to escape than for one innocent person to suffer, with the sententious observation that the ninety-nine guilty ones had "already escaped." Curry thought that the righteous Revolutionary claims had long since been paid. Upon learning that the children of the officer were dead, he asserted: "Then his grandchildren, in this

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claim are speculating on the patriotism of their ancestor."

But in the same month, in kindly and striking contrast with this stern attitude of mind, we find him, in his last utterance of the session, saying:—

Mr. Speaker, the other day I objected to a bill reported by the gentleman from New Hampshire from the Committee of Claims, because the report stated no facts. On examination of the Senate report, I find that the facts are fully stated; and as I did injustice to a very worthy old man, as I think, I would like very much, if the House will indulge me, to repair the wrong I have done him.

The House adjourned June 18th, 1860, with "bleeding Kansas" still a territory, and Slave State and Free State confronting each the other, in fierce hostility. Curry, travelling homeward through Tennessee, reached Talladega on June 27th, the day before the withdrawing delegates from the Democratic Charleston Convention gathered in Baltimore, and nominated Breckinridge and Lane as the candidates of the states rights and slavery cotton states Democracy.

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CHAPTER IX

THE DAWN OF WAR

Madame De Rémusat has recorded the striking saying of the great French Emperor, that "political hatred is like a pair of spectacles,—one sees everybody, every opinion or every sentiment, only through the glass of one's passions." To such a pitch had political excitement risen in 1860, that Napoleon's cynicism had become an expression of commonplace truth.

Nearly two months before the adjournment of Congress, the Democratic National Convention had met in Charleston, South Carolina. The division of the country into the sections which Mr. Jefferson had anticipated from the passage of the Missouri Compromise, now found its reproduction in the council chamber of Democracy itself. The two factions in the party, re-affirming each the strict construction doctrines of many previous Democratic platforms, aligned themselves sectionally by North and South upon the questions of Douglas' "Popular Sovereignty," the Dred Scott case, and the right of Congress or of Territorial legislatures to prohibit slavery in the Territories. After a bitter and momentous struggle, in which the few Northern anti-Douglas delegates out-heroded Herod in their opposition to "Squatter Sovereignty," the Convention adopted the Douglas platform, and after a prolonged session and an adjournment to Baltimore, nominated

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"the Little Giant" of Illinois as the party's candidate for President, with Herschel V. Johnson of Georgia as his running mate; while with vociferous insistence Benjamin F. Butler and Caleb Cushing of Massachusetts continued to cast their votes for President for Jefferson Davis of Mississippi.

The Breckinridge wing of the party, ten days later, met also in Baltimore, and nominated Breckinridge and Lane. The Constitutional Union party, the remnant of the former American or "Know-Nothing" organization, still staggering under the deadly blow dealt it in Virginia, in 1855, by Henry A. Wise, had in the preceding month met, also in Baltimore, and with what seems in the retrospect almost such a sense of humor as was possessed by the jester who defined a political platform as "something to get on by," had nominated Bell and Everett, on the glittering and general proposition that the decrepit party stood for "The Constitution of the Country, the Union of the States, and the enforcement of the laws."

In Massachusetts "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" was taking form in an abolitionist woman's brain; while in Louisiana a young schoolteacher was dreaming of the "Marsellaise" of the Confederacy. Within a year after the Whig-Know-Nothing-Constitutional Party sought to still elemental passions with phrases, Mrs. Julia Ward Howe had written the greatest political lyric of America:—

> Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord:
> He is trampling out the vintage where his grapes of wrath are stored,

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He has loosed the fateful lightnings of his terrible swift sword—
His truth is marching on;

and James Ryder Randall had put into words, and the Virginian Cary girls had put into music, the soul of war; and a new-born and short-lived nation was chanting in the South:—

The despot's heel is on thy shore,
Maryland, my Maryland!
His torch is at thy temple door,
Maryland, my Maryland!

For the young and aggressive party of anti-slavery, and of loose construction, Mr. Lincoln had set the pace in a series of tremendous debates for the Senatorship in Illinois, two years before, in which he had nevertheless gone down in temporary defeat before the arguments and eloquence of Douglas. But the logic of Lincoln's reiterated assertion in that great debate, that the country could not continue "half-slave and half-free," was now mingling with the mighty passions that had sprung out of the John Brown episode. There was no evasion nor dissension in the vigorous enunciation of political principles, written into the Republican platform of 1860, when its convention assembled in May, at Chicago, and nominated as its candidates Abraham Lincoln and Hannibal Hamlin. This document proclaimed in the confident notes of an unmistakable purpose, a loose construction of the Federal Constitution. It appealed to the Declaration of Independence itself in defence of the freedom and equality of all men; with a brave indifference to the memories of the Hartford Convention, and

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of the outspoken disloyalty of the earlier abolitionists, it charged the Democracy with advocating and threatening disunion; and it pronounced for the freedom of all men in the Territories, and adopted the Federalist doctrines of Protection and of Internal Improvements.

Out of the ruck and turmoil of it all emerged darkly the swart face and ominous figure of the negro slave. The platform of the Union party evaded the vision, and ignored its imminent presence. The Douglas democracy, with an illogical and unmaintainable platform, left the negro question like Mahomet's coffin, swung midway between heaven and earth, while it laid the responsibility which involved the decision of the negro's fate upon the people in the Territories, or upon the people of the States indifferently,—or anywhere, indeed, except where the Cotton States democrats reasonably placed it in their platform,—upon the Constitution and the Democratic party.

Opposed to these three divisions of the voters into political parties, stood with unwavering front and indomitable courage the young Republicans, upon a platform which declared its set and relentless purpose of prohibiting slavery in the Territories at all hazards, and at whatever stake; and whose rank and file were stirred to high passion by the flaming spirit of abolitionism.

When the election came in November, every Free State, save one, chose Republican electors; while most of the Southern States voted for Breckinridge. It was the logical and inevitable conclusion. There was no time or place for the midway business of Douglasism, or for the evasions of the "Know-Nothings."

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Curry, naturally, with his firmly fixed political principles and consistent antecedents, went with the Breckinridge democracy. He was not of Judge Douglas' political stripe; and he hardly admired him as a man.

"He was an able debater," Curry writes of him, "with strong native powers, but without wide culture. In his tastes and associations he was social and democratic; and, as a *bon vivant*, his intemperance led his associates astray."

In Alabama, "as in duty bound and from conviction" Curry entered actively into the Presidential canvass. He spoke not only in his own district, but in Greensboro, Marion, Selma, and other places. In November, following the date of the popular election, he addressed the people in the Methodist church at Talladega on "The Perils and Duty of the South." In this address, he advised and counselled the secession of the State, as the only logical and sufficient remedy under the Constitution for existing evils. The next day he set out for Washington, in order to be present at the opening of Congress.

"Little else was thought or talked about," he writes of this period, "than the threatened secession of the slave-holding states. The debates in Congress were excited and inflammatory,—menacing, not pacific; partisan, not statesmanlike. Few realized the criticalness of the situation, or seemed to forecast the consequences. Few at the North credited the intense earnestness of the South. When the telegram was received that South Carolina had seceded, it met with derisive laughter from the Republican side. Oxenstiern's advice to his son, to travel and see with how little wisdom the world was governed, had a painful verification."

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On December 13th, Curry objected to the introduction of a resolution by Morris of Illinois on "the Perpetuity of the Union." His objection was to the peril that stood in the imminent breach. Five days later, he objected to the introduction of a bill granting pensions to soldiers of the War of 1812. This objection harked back to first principles. He was ever seeking to uphold, both in great things and in small, the constitutions of his country, as he construed them.

But the perpetuity of the Union was about to be called into tremendous question: and other pensions than those of the War of 1812 lay in the near shadow of coming events. Standing at the parting of the ways, he could look back at his career in the National House of Representatives with a sense of having kept the faith. His period of service in Congress extended from December 7, 1857, to January 31, 1861. During that period the eager young Alabamian had stood in his high representative office for the continuance of slavery as an "institution" under the constitution, into which it had been written; for State Rights according to his strict interpretation of the instrument; for open territories, for economy in appropriations and expenditures, for a reduction of the number of sinecures; and for the barring of opportunities to what a later American political vernacular has given the sinister name of "graft." He had stood too for a strict interpretation of the Constitution at all points; and he had opposed protectionism, and advocated a tariff fairly adjusted to support a national government, honestly and economically administered.

"Sunset" Cox in his "Three Decades of Federal

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Legislation," seeking to depict his Congressional fellow-members, each with a few light lines, has dealt with him and Pugh, one of his colleagues from Alabama, together, in the succinct paragraph: "For subtle ratiocination of the Calhoun pattern, there was Pugh of Alabama, who had all the pith without the artistic polish of his colleague, Curry"; and a later commentator in the Macon, Georgia, *Telegraph*, has said of him:—

> At a period just preceding the War he was justly considered the leader of his party in the House of Representatives. The records of Congress glow with his brilliant and patriotic appeals in behalf of Southern rights and institutions.

On December 20, 1860, to the "derisive laughter" of the Republican members of the House, South Carolina, with grim memories of "Nullification" and of "the Bloody Proclamation," seceded from the Union under what she had always conceived to be her constitutional and unsurrendered right. On the 28th of that month, Curry went to Annapolis as the accredited representative of Alabama, to present his credentials to the Governor of that State, and to consult with him concerning the coöperation of the two States with respect to their future welfare.

The Governor of Maryland was absent from the capital at the time of Curry's visit; and the latter left a communication in writing, to which his excellency replied through the newspapers, without giving the public an opportunity to read Curry's letter with the reply. Nothing came of the little adventure; but the story of the episode is preserved in the correspondence and in Curry's report of his visit to the

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capital of Maryland, all of which are published in the "Debates" of the Alabama Secession Convention.

On January 1, 1861, Curry left Washington, *en route* for Montgomery, to be present at the sessions of the Alabama Convention; and at various places on the way he made speeches and received ovations at the hands of multitudes. On January 7th, the Convention assembled, and was opened with prayer by the Reverend Basil Manly. Curry was invited to a seat on the platform; and three days later he and his colleague, Mr. Pugh, in response to a resolution of the Convention, submitted to the body a communication stating the purposes of the new Republican government of Washington as anticipated by the writers. On the following day, January 11, 1861, the Convention adopted an ordinance of secession by a vote of 61 to 39.

"The intense earnestness of the people" over this grave and momentous action of their representatives, unappreciated, as Curry states, at the North, was illustrated in the capital city of Alabama and throughout the State, by the reception which was given to the withdrawal of the State from the Union. The excitement was intense, and vented itself in the roaring of cannon and the ringing of bells; while the Convention hall, whose doors were flung open upon the announcement of the event, was thronged with an enthusiastic and cheering multitude. At night the city was brilliantly illuminated, and the streets were thronged with a concourse of men, women and children. A mass-meeting was held in front of Montgomery Hall, and Curry and John B. Gordon addressed the multitude. It was the first

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time that the later educator had met the later soldier, whose similar patriotism in subsequent years was to aid in reconciling and re-uniting the then divided people of a common country.

On January 13th, Curry went to Selma, Alabama, and on the next day to Talladega. On the 19th, the Convention, still in session, elected him a delegate—"deputy," he calls it—to the Convention of Seceding States, which was to meet at Montgomery, on February 4th following, for the purpose of organizing a provisional government. It was on the way to this Convention,—as he pauses in the swift narrative of events, made in his later years, to record,—that he made another notable acquaintance in the person of the distinguished lady, who has left the mark of her literary talent upon the story of Southern letters in her novels; and a yet more grateful memory in the hearts of many, whose lives survive the stormy scenes sought to be herein depicted, by her attention to the sick and wounded in the Confederate Camps of 1861–1865.

On February 3rd, *en route* to Montgomery, to attend the Congress, on the boat above Selma, I was introduced to Miss Augusta Evans, an ardent Confederate, the authoress of "Inez," "Beulah," "Macaria," etc., and then began a delightful friendship with a pure and noble and gifted woman.

Long years afterward this friend of the river trip to Montgomery, writing to him of his special mission to Spain, says :

MOBILE, JAN. 1, 1902.

MY DEAR MR. CURRY:

"*Forty-one years ago* I listened to the speech you delivered in the "Confederacy Congress" at Montgomery

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when presenting to Howell Cobb an inkstand of Talladega marble. How many, who heard you then, survive to-day to congratulate you on this latest laurel wreath earned by your successful service? Hoping that 1902 comes freighted with blessings for you and your wife, and soliciting your generous indulgence for this ugly scrawl, believe me—as of yore,

Your sincere, unreconstructed rebel friend,
AUGUSTA EVANS WILSON."

In the meantime, while Curry was in the South, the dramatic events which prefaced the crisis were taking place in Washington. As the ordinances of secession were passed one after another by the Southern States, the Senators and Representatives from the South were withdrawing from the two Houses of the National Congress.

"The onlookers," says a historian of the period, writing from the Northern viewpoint of these tragic circumstances, "thought of Webster and his prayer, that his dying eyes as they sought the sun, might not behold it shining upon a torn and rent land, and they cursed the hour in which they themselves were witnessing the dissolution of the Union."

It was not merely men that were leaving the familiar halls. "The States were going out!" The Senators in person, and the Representatives for the most part by written addresses, took their leave. One of the former, who became in time the central figure of this tremendous political tragedy, said on the 21st day of January, 1861, in a farewell address to the assembled Senate, the final word announcing the attitude of the seceding States:—

"A great man who now reposes with his fathers," said Senator Jefferson Davis of Mississippi, "and who has

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often been arraigned for a want of fealty to the Union, advocated the doctrine of Nullification because it preserved the Union. It was because of his deep-seated attachment to the Union,—his determination to find some remedy for existing ills, short of a severance of the ties which bound South Carolina to the other States,—that Mr. Calhoun advocated the doctrine of Nullification, which he proclaimed to be peaceful, to be within the limits of State power, not to disturb the Union, but only to be a means of bringing the agent before the tribunal of the States for their judgment.

"Secession belongs to a different class of remedies. It is to be justified upon the basis that the States are sovereign. There was a time when none denied it. I hope the time may come again when a better comprehension of the theory of our Government, and the inalienable rights of the people of the States, will prevent any one from denying that each State is a sovereign, and thus may reclaim the grants which it has made to any agent whomsoever."

Second in the Senate, and among the first three or four of the delegations from the South, the men from Alabama answered the call of their sovereign States. On January 12th, 1861, L. Q. C. Lamar, and the other Mississippi representatives, bade adieu to the House in a formal note of fourteen lines; and on the day of Mr. Davis' farewell address to the Senate, Curry and his colleagues presented to Speaker Pennington their communication of withdrawal:—

WASHINGTON CITY,
January 21, 1861.

Sir:—Having received information that the State of Alabama, through a convention representing her sovereignty, has adopted and ratified an ordinance, by which

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she withdraws from the Union of the United States of America, and resumes the powers heretofore delegated to the Federal Government, it is proper that we should communicate the same to you, and through you to the House of Representatives, over which you preside, and announce our withdrawal from the further deliberations of that body.

The causes which, in the judgment of our State, rendered such action necessary, we need not relate. It is sufficient to say, that duty requires obedience to her sovereign will, and that we shall return to our homes, sustain her action, and share the fortunes of her people.

We have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servants,

GEORGE S. HOUSTON,
SYDENHAM MOORE,
DAVID CLOPTON,
JAMES L. PUGH,
J. L. M. CURRY,
JAMES A. STALLWORTH.

Hon. WILLIAM PENNINGTON,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Of the men who signed this paper, informed with a spirit of duty, dignified in its expression, and carrying between the lines an unconcealed pathos, it may be here written that their subsequent careers vindicated their pure patriotism and lofty purpose. Houston became a *post-bellum* Governor of his State. Sydenham Moore, an intimate friend of Curry's, fell at Seven Pines with a mortal wound, and died from its effects a short time afterwards in Richmond. Clopton and Stallworth were honored by the people of their State; and James L. Pugh lived to represent Alabama in the Senate of a restored and indissoluble Union.

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CHAPTER X

A NEW NATION

Of the popular vote in the Presidential election of November, 1860, the Republican ticket had received 1,866,352; the Constitutional Union ticket 589,581; and the two democratic tickets together, 2,220,920, of which 1,375,157 votes had been cast for the ticket headed by Douglas, and 845,763 for that headed by Breckinridge. A loose-construction party, to use the political phraseology of the time, for the first time in the history of the Union, had gained control of the government, though by a popular minority; and when Mr. Lincoln took the oath of office as President of the United States on March 4th, 1861, seven of the Southern States had already left the Union, and others were preparing to follow. Virginia had called a convention, which met in Richmond on the 13th day of February, 1861, a majority of whose members were Union men, and opposed to the secession of the Commonwealth. On April 14th, while the Convention was in session, Fort Sumter, after a bombardment of thirty hours by the military forces of the seceded States, surrendered; and the President of the United States on April 15th issued a call for 75,000 volunteers to coerce the States which had withdrawn from the Union. On April 17th, in consequence of the call for volunteers, Virginia

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enacted an ordinance of secession, and communicated its decision to the provisional government of the Confederate States at Montgomery, Alabama.

In the meantime, Curry, as a deputy of his State, had been present when the convention of the Seceding States met at Montgomery, February 4, 1861. The body assembled in the Senate Chamber of the Capitol. Howell Cobb of Georgia was elected president of the body. Others among the ablest and most distinguished members who participated in its deliberations were Alexander H. Stephens, Thomas Reade Rootes Cobb, Benjamin Hill, Robert Toombs, T. J. Withers, Robert W. Barnwell, Charles G. Meminger, R. H. Smith, Robert W. Walker, Lewis T. Wigfall, and John Hemphill.

Curry's colleagues, in addition to Messrs. Walker and Smith, already mentioned, were Colin J. McCrae, John Gill Shorter, William P. Chilton, Stephen F. Hale, David P. Lewis, and Thomas Fearn.

The immediate and most urgent business of the Convention was to prepare and adopt a provisional constitution, and to organize the government of the new nation. A constitution was framed and adopted, which in its provisions carefully and explicitly guarded by express language all those issues which had been the subjects of controversy and contention between the loose constructionists and the strict constructionists of the old Union.

Jefferson Davis of Mississippi and Alexander H. Stephens of Georgia were respectively elected President and Vice-president of the Confederate States of America; and in the presence of a great multitude the President took the oath of office, standing on the steps of the portico of the historic building, looking

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from its eminence upon the city. The spot where Davis stood is still marked by a star, let into the pavement of the step, to point to the visitor of later generations the birthplace of one of the most tragic political Commonwealths in history.

"Mr. Davis reached Montgomery on the 17th of February," writes Curry in his memoranda, "and was inaugurated on the following day. He stood on the steps of the capitol looking west, as he read his Inaugural, and when the oath of office was administered, with great solemnity and reverence he bowed and kissed a large open Bible, which lay before him. The induction of the President of the Confederate States was most fitting. Then sounded the cannon. The first gun was fired by a grand-daughter of President Tyler. She was a pretty little girl about twelve years old."

Doubtless the heart of the Southern President in this supreme moment was as sad and anxious as was that of the newly elected head of a rent and disorganized Union beyond the Potomac; but upon it lay no burden of doubt as to the justice and righteousness of the cause.

"We have changed," said Mr. Davis, toward the close of his inaugural address, "the constituent parts, but not the system of our government. The Constitution formed by our fathers is that of these Confederate States, in their exposition of it; and, in the judicial construction it has received, we have a light which reveals its true meaning."

He concluded his address in a lofty strain:—

"It is joyous," he said, "in the midst of perilous times, to look around upon a people united in heart; where one purpose of high resolve animates and actuates the whole, —where the sacrifices to be made are not weighed in the

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balance against honor, and right and liberty and equality. Obstacles may retard,—they cannot long prevent,—the progress of a movement sanctioned by its justice, and sustained by a virtuous people. Reverently let us invoke the God of our fathers to guide and protect us in our efforts to perpetuate the principles, which by this blessing they were able to vindicate, establish, and transmit to their posterity, and with a continuance of this favor ever gratefully acknowledged we may hopefully look forward to success, to peace, and to prosperity."

Until Fort Sumter fell, there were many in the North, even of those who had been original abolitionists, who, while bitterly lamenting the occasion, were willing to see the Union dissolved. Horace Greeley's famous "Let our erring sisters go in peace," expressed the sentiments of a large number of the commercial and academic classes.

"By March," writes Curry, "a permanent Constitution was adopted, and submitted to the separate Confederate States for their ratification. The Congress adhered with almost literal fidelity to the Constitution of the United States, as not the provisions of that instrument, but the violations, were the *gravamen* of our complaints. The New York *Herald*, in April, published the full text of our Constitution, and advised the North to adopt it as a settlement of the difficulties.

"Very little difference of opinion was developed in the Congress. The most patriotic harmony prevailed, and some of the most *sagacious* members thought there would be no war. All deprecated such an event, and hoped, as no interference with the United States was proposed, that a peaceful adjustment might be secured. The troubles, growing out of the garrisoning of forts in Charleston harbor, brought on a collision, which occasioned the four years' bloody tragedy."

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After the election of Mr. Lincoln, Curry received a letter from Major James Longstreet, then at Albuquerque, New Mexico, authorizing him to tender Longstreet's services to Alabama in the event of her secession; and later his services were offered to the Confederacy through Curry, who carried the letter to Mr. Davis. They were accepted by the President, who at once appointed Longstreet a Colonel, from which office he rose to be one of the great Major Generals of the Confederacy. Raphael Semmes, of later "Alabama" fame, wrote to Curry about the situation; and after resigning his commission in the United States Navy, and his position on the Light House Board, telegraphed that he was in a condition to serve the South.

Army and navy officers of the United States military and naval organizations, all about the world, who were Southerners by birth or residence, and not a few who were neither, but believed that the cause of the South was a just cause, hastened to tender their swords and services to the Confederacy.

It is worthy of record here, even at the risk of wearisome iteration, that these men did not engage in this service for the sake of perpetuating slavery; but that they were animated by the same patriotic sentiment of loyalty to constitutional freedom and to the sovereignty of the individual States that impelled the political leaders of the mighty movement. Robert E. Lee owned no slaves at the time of the War. Fitzhugh Lee never owned a slave. J. E. B. Stuart, the great cavalry leader of the Confederacy, owned no slave at the time of the war. Joseph E. Johnston never owned a slave. And what is true of these men is true of many others, who hav-

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ing held commissions in the army of the United States, had no hesitation as to the direction in which lay their paramount allegiance.

In the month of May, 1861, the Confederate Congress adjourned, after having first resolved to reassemble in its next session at Richmond, Virginia. Curry states that this change was made as an imagined military necessity; but that in his opinion the measure was of very doubtful wisdom. Whatever its wisdom or unwisdom, it had the practical effect of making Virginia the battleground of the sanguinary struggle that followed, and of visiting upon the ancient Commonwealth a physical devastation that was suffered in the same measure by no other one of the Confederate States.

On July 20, 1861, the Confederate Congress met in Richmond; and on the same day Curry left Talladega for the new capital of the Confederacy, and arrived in Richmond the following morning. Upon his arrival, he learned of the near approach of collision between the troops of the two governments.

"Hearing that a battle was imminent at Manassas," he writes, "I took the train . . . to hasten to the scene of the conflict. The cars were so crowded that the whole day hardly sufficed to enable us to reach Manassas. The battle had been fought; the victory won; and the Federal soldiers, in complete rout, had fled to Washington. I rode over the battlefield and along the line of retreat, and to me the carnage seemed dreadful. It was my first sight of dead men killed in battle. One thing impressed me powerfully: the utter disorganization and want of discipline in our army. Victory had demoralized our troops as much as defeat had the enemy. To my inexperienced eye it seemed as if a well-appointed brigade

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could have captured our whole army. Everything was in confusion, and men and officers seemed to be straggling at will."

On the occasion of his visit to the battlefield of Manassas, he made his first acquaintance with Generals Joseph E. Johnston and P. G. T. Beauregard. No other opportunity or occasion occurred to him to come in contact with the military organizations of the Confederacy until the following September, when upon the adjournment of Congress he again visited the army, and went as far as Mason's and Munson's Hills, from which he could see the flag of the Union floating over the Capitol at Washington. He mingled with the men of several Alabama regiments, who paid him the compliment of more than one serenade; and he renewed his acquaintance with General Longstreet, with whom he dined by invitation at Fairfax Court House in a distinguished group of officers, including General Johnston.

On the day following his visit to Manassas, Curry returned to Richmond. The provisional Congress of the Confederacy had assembled in the capitol of the Commonwealth, a beautiful structure of classical proportions, designed by Mr. Jefferson upon the model of the Maison Carrée at Nismes, in France, and which had witnessed already the presence of many great men of Virginia and the nation, and had been the scene of many momentous and historical events. Among the new members of Congress was a venerable ex-President of the United States, John Tyler, during whose administration Texas had been admitted to the Union, and whose singular devotion to the Union over which he had once presided was only equalled by his patriotic loyalty, as a State-

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rights, strict-constructionist, to the sovereign Commonwealth of Virginia.

Among the matters of business claiming the attention of the Congress was the consideration of bills that were introduced providing for the admission into the Confederacy of the States of Missouri and Kentucky. The admission of these States was favored in speeches that were made by Tyler, Toombs, Wigfall, and other members of prominence, and the measures were enacted into law. But Curry, with a keen and philosophic discrimination which postponed utility to principle, opposed their passage with a logic which was as inexorable as it might have proved efficient under other and less exigent conditions. In his opposition, he vindicated the accuracy and exactness of Mr. Calhoun's political philosophy; and when some true history of the great South Carolina statesman's life and career shall come to be written, it may well contain the record that of all his disciples there was none who followed more exactly and comprehendingly in the path of his political footsteps than did J. L. M. Curry.

"I opposed them ineffectually," he writes, "and almost alone," he adds in another place, "on the ground that their admission would be in utter contravention of all the principles underlying our secession and the formation of the Confederacy;—that a majority of the people of Kentucky and Missouri were not in sympathy with us, and that the representatives would have no constituents. My predictions were too faithfully verified. The States were soon in the complete control of the Federal army: and those who sat as representatives of those States owed their pretence of an election to the votes cast by soldiers in our army from those States. With

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some honorable exceptions, the representatives were worse than useless."

It was during his sojourn in Richmond as a member of the Confederate Congress that he first met the young woman, who two years after the war became his second wife, and whose association with him, in that affectionate and intimate relation, exercised a noble influence upon his later more distinguished career.

"I soon went to board," he writes, "with A. H. Sands, esquire, between First and Foushee, on Grace Street, and remained with him during my service in Congress. From him and his family I received the kindest and most cordial attentions, for which I shall ever be truly grateful. Before going to Mr. Sands', I had boarded fourteen days at the Spotswood Hotel. During August, in company with Judge Chilton, my colleague, I called at Mr. James Thomas, Jr.'s, corner of Second and Grace. The family were so gentle, so hospitable, so cordial, that my heart was won; and during my service in Congress a week seldom passed that I did not take tea with the family. Separated from my own family, I as eagerly longed for the repetition of my visits to this welcome home, as school-girl ever looked forward to vacation and reunion with parents."

During the period of his attendance on Congress, Curry made a number of speeches at different churches in behalf of colportage among the soldiers of the army. He also delivered several lectures, one of which was on "The Wants of the Confederacy." This was delivered on the 13th of February, 1862; and even then was a spacious subject, embracing an almost illimitable field. Among those who pleased his natural sense of self-esteem by

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asking for its publication, he mentions the Hon. William C. Rives, the Reverend Moses D. Hoge, General Winder, Dr. Brown, and the Hon. John Randolph Tucker. But with a wise caution, for a public speaker of frequent occasion, he declined the flattering request.

On the 22nd day of February, 1862 (Washington's Birthday), the provisional government of the Confederate States, established in the preceding year at Montgomery, Alabama, had ceased to exist; and on that day Jefferson Davis of Mississippi and Alexander H. Stephens of Georgia, having been unanimously chosen President and Vice-president, respectively, by the votes of the convention of every Southern State, were duly inaugurated for a constitutional term of six years. The oath of office was administered to the President by the Hon. J. D. Halyburton, and to Alexander H. Stephens by the President of the Confederate States. On the next day President Davis sent to the Senate for confirmation a list of Cabinet appointments, as follows: Secretary of State, Judah P. Benjamin of Louisiana; Secretary of War, George Wythe Randolph of Virginia; Secretary of the Navy, Stephen R. Mallory of Florida; Secretary of the Treasury, C. G. Memminger of South Carolina; Postmaster General, Mr. Henry of Kentucky; Attorney General, Herschel V. Johnson of Georgia.

The Congress adjourned on April 18th, 1862. Curry went home, for a short stay, returning to Richmond and his duties on the 17th of August.

There was little which was eventful in Curry's political service or in the political annals of this period. The drama of war held the stage and pub-

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lic interest centred in the operations of the forces in the field. The Seven Days' Battles about Richmond took place during the summer of 1862; and the stout hearted city held her own against mighty odds.

On the 6th of October Curry left Richmond for Talladega, and reached home on the 12th. During his attendance upon the sessions of Congress in Richmond, Mrs. Curry had remained in Alabama, taking an active part in various patriotic charities. She was at the head of a sewing circle, which was accustomed to meet at the old Curry homestead at Kelly's Springs, for the purpose of making clothes for the soldiers. Although Mrs. Curry was a frail and delicate woman, she was possessed of an indomitable energy and perseverance, and of great prudence and tact in the management of others. By her industry and liberality she had already accomplished a large amount of work of this kind, for which she had been accorded great praise throughout the country. In many instances the private soldier at the front left no bread-winner at home to care for the family; and the majority of the men in the Confederate armies were not slave-owners. So it happened that it was not uncommon for the soldiers' families to find themselves in destitution and want, even in the earlier days of the War, although contributions for their relief were frequent and liberal. Those who had gave willingly, however, to those who had not; and at one time Curry himself turned over to the Probate Court of Talladega County, without thought of compensation, for the aid of soldiers' families, one thousand bushels of corn. It was a large and generous gift; and yet

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so general were donations of this character from those who were able to make them, that this large contribution attracted no special attention; and, Curry adds in recording it, it may be "less gratitude."

Returning to Richmond, he writes of the Congress then in session:—

The legislation amounted to very little. Mr. Davis gave to Congress very little information beyond what was published in the newspapers. We were apparently expected to put into statutes what he deemed best for the interests of the Confederacy. Possibly, probably, it was best not to communicate military secrets to Congress, for very little occurred in either House that did not promptly find its way into the newspapers.

We had some excellent men in the House. Mr. William C. Rives was a ripe scholar, an experienced statesman, a high-toned gentleman. Garnett of Virginia was a man of abundant possibilities. He died, and I made one of the addresses on the occasion. Staples and Preston were eloquent men. Henry S. Foote of Tennessee was *sui generis*,—whether partially demented, or merely disaffected to the South, it was difficult to decide.

The impossibility of appreciating our currency was every day more clearly demonstrated, and the rapid depreciation made increased issue necessary; and the two counter-currents were running violently. A proposition to make our notes a legal tender had strong and zealous advocates. I opposed this in an elaborate speech, which was much praised, and which I think had the effect of killing the measure. I made two speeches on different aspects of the currency question.

Frequently I presided in the House, and when the Speaker, Mr. Bocock, was absent, I was elected Speaker *pro tem.* If I had been a member of the next Congress, I should probably have been chosen to preside, as very

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many of the members had very decidedly expressed their preference in that direction.

Contemporary and later testimony acclaims Curry's merits and abilities as a presiding officer. He was a student of parliamentary law, and possessed the qualities of alert perception, keen intelligence, disinterested honesty, and swift and firm decision. All these had been sharpened and intensified by his large experience in both religious and political bodies and assemblages; and if the probability which he suggests had ever become a reality, there can be no reason to doubt that he would have so discharged the duties of Speaker of the House of Representatives as to add another laurel to those that he had already won, or to those which he later wore.

Curry's *memorabilia* are strangely silent on details, impressions and personal touches concerning the Confederate Congress which we would be very grateful for in building up a picture of that unique governmental body. The Constitution of the Confederacy seemed to him an instrument of great wisdom, and an everlasting refutation of the charges which have been brought against the framers, as conspirators erecting a great slavery oligarchy. Its tenure of office provisions, its initiation, in a modified form, of the British custom of allowing the President representation on the floor of the two houses through his constitutional advisers, especially appealed to him. In speaking of the Confederate instrument he later declared:—

> Every possible infringement upon popular liberty, or upon State rights, every oppressive or sectional use of

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the taxing power, was carefully guarded against, and civil service reform was made easy and practicable. Stubborn and corrupting controversies about tariffs, post-office, improvement of rivers and harbors, subsidies, extra pay, were avoided. The taxing power was placed under salutary restrictions. Responsibility was more clearly fixed. Money in the treasury was protected against purchasable majorities and wicked combinations. Adequate powers for a frugal and just administration were granted to the General Government. The States maintained their autonomy, and were not reduced to petty corporations, or counties, or dependencies.

The study of the Confederate Constitution would be useful at present, as there never was a time when the need of restrictions and guarantees against irresponsible power was more urgent. The public mind has been schooled against any assertion of State rights or of constitutional limitations, and taught to look with aversion and ridicule upon any serious attempt to set up the ancient landmarks. The abeyance of State authority, reliance in actions and opinions upon Federal protection and aid, the vast accumulation of power and influence at Washington, the supposed necessary supremacy of the Central Government, have caused a wide departure from the theory and principles of the fathers.

He was constant in praise of the learning, the ability and the legislative wisdom of the individuals composing the Congress operating under this admirable constitution. And yet his records suggest a dullness in its proceedings, a certain futility in its debates, a certain lack of a proper forum for pure civic ability. The inference is very clear that though the Confederate Congress was nobly organized to carry on a settled and placid government, the knowledge that success in war could alone guar-

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antee its existence tended inevitably to give it second place in the public consideration, and to rob its proceedings of that lofty dignity that belongs of right to parliaments of established nations. The soul and spirit of a brave, struggling people hovered over the field of battle, and not over the chamber of debate and mere intellectual combat.

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CHAPTER XI

THE EBBING OF THE TIDE

On May 4, 1863, Curry reached home on his return from Richmond, and announced himself a candidate for re-election to the Confederate Congress. His district comprised the four counties of Calhoun, Randolph, Talladega and Shelby. For a while after his announcement he had no opposition. Then a candidate appeared in the person of Marcus Cruikshanks, whom Curry speaks of as "a very worthy man." Curry addressed to him a communication, suggesting that they canvass the district together,—a proposition which Mr. Cruikshanks declined. The latter's supporters adopted the dangerous and effective policy of a modern "still hunt." They engaged in no open arguments, and conducted their political program with a secrecy which proved to be invincible. "Silence is the true eloquence of power," said a great French statesman, "because it admits of no reply." Curry was unable to answer the insidious attacks of his political enemies, or to withstand the logic of events which were now proving potent arguments against the doctrines of secession and of State rights. At the election in August, 1863, Curry was defeated, his opponent carrying three out of the four counties of the district, and leaving him only a small majority in the county of Calhoun.

The arguments of word and of event, which had proved so overwhelming in their results, were not

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very far to seek when the smoke of the political battle cleared away.

The district, as constituted, had been originally opposed to secession. At the time of the election Vicksburg had fallen before the victorious forces of Grant; and the reverses to the Confederate arms in Pennsylvania and in Tennessee had alike served to dispirit a people who had not been sanguine of success from the beginning. A secret peace organization had sprung up in the district. Deserters from the army were multiplying in numbers, and sowing the seeds of discontent among those with whom they came in contact. The volunteers had long since gone to the front, many of them never to return; and a conscription, which had already begun, of dire necessity, to take the old men and the young alike, "robbing both the cradle and the grave," was now arousing a spirit of ill-concealed hostility. "General Hard Times" had assumed command in the Confederacy. The currency became every day of less value. A Confederate paper dollar, that had been worth a dollar and ten cents in the August of two years before, had now depreciated to such an extent that it took from twelve to thirteen such dollars in August, 1863, to equal in value a dollar of gold. Taxes were high, and the tax-gatherer of the government was establishing granaries, in which were stored the government's exacted fractions and tithes of the meagre crops raised by the old men, and women and children, and the negro slaves. A barrel of flour in March, 1863, cost in the Confederacy twenty-five Confederate dollars. In February of that year, the money value of a day's rations for one hundred soldiers,

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which in the first year of the war had been nine dollars, was at market prices one hundred and twenty-three. Salt, which had advanced in the first year of the struggle from ten to eighteen dollars a sack, was still going up in price with a steadiness which the salt "licks" and springs of Tennessee, the Indian Territory and Southwest Virginia, seemed powerless to counteract. A cordon of blockading Federal vessels shut out the markets of the world from the great staple, which so short a time before had been endowed with a royal appellation, and "King Cotton" was dethroned. The blockade-runners, from Nassau in the Bahamas to Wilmington in North Carolina, brought in, under the stress of darkness and ever imminent danger, scanty supplies of medicines and surgical necessaries; but there was little help from the outside world for the environed South.

Out of this pressure of poverty and distress were generated the demagogue and the malcontent, who availed themselves, with sinister purpose and successful accomplishment, of the depressing circumstances that existed to inflame the prejudices of the weak-hearted and the poverty-stricken against secession and secessionists.

Curry's whole political career, his open and consistent advocacy of political doctrines, which were now denounced as the causes and origin of the war, afforded a shining target for attack. He had been an arch-secessionist; and he was still in favor of a vigorous prosecution of the struggle. It was not alone upon the ignorant and the credulously disaffected that delusive promises of an early peace had their telling and depressing effect.

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His defeat for re-election brought him many expressions of sorrow and regret from all parts of the Confederacy; and the news was received with downcast hearts, and with universal sympathy throughout the South, among those whom he denominates "the true and faithful." It was no time for idleness or repining, and Curry immediately turned from statesmanship, in which he delighted, to war, which he abhorred.

On the 22nd of September, 1863, he went out with a company of "Home Guards," to aid in an impending battle; but the great fight at Chickamauga had occurred before they reached the army.

"I went over the battle-field," he writes, "before the Federal dead were buried, and then visited the army occupying Missionary Ridge, Lookout Mountain, and the Valley between. From Lookout Mountain one of the grandest views in the world is presented. The two armies,—the Federals were in Chattanooga,—lay at the beholder's feet."

On October 10, 1863, he reached home from the seat of war. In the early part of November he visited Perry county, and shortly thereafter spent a few days at Montgomery, where the legislature of the State was in session. Although he makes no mention of it in his *memorabilia*, his friends and admirers appear at this time to have planned his election to the Confederate States Senate, as is indicated by a letter found among his papers.

TALLADEGA, ALA.,
Nov. 13, 1863.

HON. THOMAS B. COOPER,

MY DEAR SIR:—In the first place excuse (you would have done that without the asking, if paper is as scarce in your office as in mine,) this blank-book paper. In the

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second place, you will excuse an old friend, for venturing to intercede with you for help, if he needs it, for one whom he ardently desires to be promoted by the Legislature. I mean the Hon. J. L. M. Curry, who is a candidate for the Confederate States Senate. I know not your predilections on that subject; nor do I know who are the most prominent competitors of Mr. Curry. I know this much, however, that I have nothing to say in disparagement of any of them. But I feel very anxious to have Mr. Curry in the Senate, because I know him well, and know him to be a pure man, as well as a man of brilliant talents and extraordinary working qualities. I know of no man in the State or Confederacy of more promising qualities for usefulness in Congress; and there is none of purer morals, or more unbending integrity. Besides, I think the time has come when West Alabama should be known to the country. Heretofore the idea has been, that no man, however talented,—however sound in political sentiment,—however pure in character,—could have his claims to represent the State in the National Senate considered, unless he could have the geographical recommendation of a residence in North Alabama or South Alabama. East and West Alabama have been ignored. But at the extra session you took from West Alabama her patriotic Jemison. If you will now secure for East Alabama her just but long-deferred claims to a name and a place in the State by electing our young and gifted Curry, I think the work of reform, in this respect, will be in the right direction and at the right time.

. . . . . .

I shall regard it as a personal favor, and what is more, a public good, if you will throw your influence in favor of Mr. Curry.

We are all well.

Your friend truly,

GEO. S. WALDON.

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But the efforts of Curry's advocates were unavailing. Whether his "geographical residence," so earnestly urged by his friend, Waldon, as a ground of his election, put him at a disadvantage; whether the same potent causes which had compassed his defeat for the House of Representatives at the hands of a popular constituency four months before, were again at work among the members of the legislature; whether his claims were not vigorously and aggressively pressed; or whether his failure was the result of a combination of these causes, is now beyond determination. A stronger probability than any of these is that the competition of some of the ablest and very foremost men of the State and of the South was too great to be overcome; for the man chosen by the Alabama legislature for Confederate States Senator at this juncture was Richard W. Walker, who was one of the most conspicuous statesmen and leaders of the young republic.

On November 30, 1863, Curry set out for Richmond to serve out the unexpired period of his final term in the House of Representatives. He was nearly a week in reaching the Capitol. Of his subsequent service in this session he has preserved the following record:—

During the session I presided much, and made two speeches,—one in favor of negotiating, even with Benjamin F. Butler, for the exchange of prisoners; and the other on offering commercial privileges to some European nation to recognize us, and intervene with arms.

In the early part of February (1864), a joint committee headed by Semmes of the Senate and Clapp of the House, was appointed to prepare an address to the people of the Confederate States. Senator Semmes was to

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draft so much of the address as related to Congressional legislation; but he failed to perform the task. To myself the remainder was assigned. The Committee approved my address. I read it to the House amid much applause; and so enthusiastic was the approbation, that every member of both Houses signed it. Several thousand copies were ordered to be published, for circulation among the people and in the army. When I joined the army a few months afterwards, the officers, knowing my authorship of the address, gave me most cordial and flattering receptions.

Before Congress adjourned, I purchased cavalry equipments, intending to join the 53rd Alabama Cavalry regiment, in which my brother Thomas was a captain. Gen. J. E. B. Stuart had previously written a letter to President Davis, asking my appointment as Judge of the military court for his corps. Gen. Longstreet also tendered me a position on his staff.

Congress adjourned, and Curry's term of service expired on February 18, 1864, with the clouds thickening about the doomed Confederacy. He went South to complete his arrangements for entering the army, moved by an eager spirit of aiding the cause to which he had devoted himself in whatever way his service might prove available. He reached Talladega on the 24th; and on the 15th of March, at the invitation of General Leonidas Polk, the Bishop-soldier of the Confederacy, he went to Demopolis, in the western part of the State, where at a grand review of the ragged army of the South, he had the pleasure of addressing several acres of soldiers.

Before the expiration of the sixty days' furlough which he had obtained upon the adjournment of Congress, he received an unsolicited appointment

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from President Davis to the position of Commissioner under the Habeas Corpus Act, to serve with General Joseph E. Johnston's army, but not under him.

"My duties were judicial," he states, "—to investigate charges of disloyalty and treason preferred against civilians; and hence, by some persons, I am called 'Judge.'

"I went to Dalton, Georgia, in April, 1864; and having little to do in connection with my office, I spent the most of my time in visiting the various camps, and familiarizing myself with military movements. Many brigades were addressed by me; and my services in this line were much sought after. Gen. Johnston had a grand review, to infuse fresh confidence into his men. The display of banners and muskets and mimic warfare was very magnificent.

"A gracious revival pervaded the army, while in camp. Meetings were held every night. Chaplains and other preachers held religious services. I heard Gen. M. P. Lowry, a Baptist minister, in command of a Mississippi brigade, and an officer much trusted by Gen. Johnston, quite often. Hundreds of soldiers would gather in the open air to hear the simple gospel; and the converts were very numerous.

"The Georgia Baptist Convention met this spring in Atlanta; and I attended and made an address on army colportage. Here I saw for the first time Governor Joseph E. Brown, who was a member of the Convention."

Curry was not yet an ordained minister; but his notes are full of references to religious matters. He has left an account of religion in the Southern army among the soldiers, in his "Civil History of the Confederate States"; and no one can read the frequent entries which he has made in his journals and *memorabilia* without a deep sense of his piety and of his lofty spiritual character. The religious spirit seems

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from the beginning to have dominated his life; and, over and above the figure of the politician, statesman, orator, and educator, shines about him with an ever increasing lustre the halo of an humble servant of Christ.

When in May, 1864, General Johnston began his retreat towards Atlanta, he requested Curry to serve on his staff as special aide. Inasmuch as the latter's regular official duties were suspended by the stress and exigency of military operations, he consented to accept this office; and thus became attached to General Johnston's staff, of which he remained a member until his detail elsewhere in the following July.

Curry's associations with General Johnston became close and intimate; and he came, from observation and study, to form a very high estimate of the character and ability of the great Confederate general, who as a tactician, disciplinarian, and a master of logistics by the impartial testimony of military criticism, was without a superior in the armies of the Confederacy.

"Gen. Johnston," he writes of the retreat before Sherman, "conducted this campaign with unsurpassed skill and strategy, thwarting the enemy's plans and designs, inflicting heavy losses upon him, losing not over five thousand of his own men, whose enthusiastic confidence he preserved to the end. In this retreat, such was the forethought of the commander, that while preserving and improving the *morale* of his men, the Commissary was managed with consummate energy and ability. . . .

"At Cartersville a battle-order was read, proper disposition of troops was made for attacking the enemy,—

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and with shouts and strong hopes our boys reversed their march. Hood, on the right, was to attack, and to be supported by Polk in the centre and Hardee on the left. By some fatal misinformation, Hood, instead of attacking, fell back to his lines of the morning, reporting that he was flanked. His blunder and error defeated the plan. Johnston was excited and mad at the frustration of a plan devised and prepared for some days before. Still he arranged his men for meeting the enemy on the next day. In the morning, his purpose was to attack Sherman's army in detail, knowing they were divided and separated by travelling on two roads. At night-fall Gen. Johnston, with several of us, rode along the line; and Gen. Johnston remarked on the rapidity and tact with which our boys had thrown up temporary breast-works. As we returned to headquarters, the General told us to get a good rest, as we should have plenty of work on to-morrow. An hour or so after retiring (Col. E. J. Harvie, an Inspector-general and myself tented together), we were summoned to Gen. Johnston's tent. At a council, Hood said that he could not hold his position; Polk was doubtful; Hardee wanted to fight. Gen. Johnston reluctantly, and ever since regretfully, yielded to two of his corps commanders, and gave orders to fall back across the river. I was sent to Gen. Wheeler's camp, some distance on the right, to summon him to Gen. Johnston, to receive instructions about protecting our rear with his cavalry."

Curry's estimate of Johnston has value as affording an intimate view of a man who did not wear his heart on his sleeve:

"Frequently I rode with General Johnston at night, and he would, when in a talking mood, tell me of Marlborough's and Wellington's and Napoleon's campaigns, which seemed as familiar to him as the alphabet. When

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he had travelled as far as he intended, he would dismount, wrap himself in a blanket, and be asleep in five minutes. He was singularly reticent in reference to his plans,—kept his own counsels, but had marvellous facility in finding out the movements and plans of the enemy. The cavalry was utilized and made to subserve its legitimate office of acting as eyes and ears for the infantry and artillery."

After the war was ended, and the events of that momentous struggle had become matters of history, General Johnston, in a conversation with Curry, said to him that he would not have asked anything better of Sherman than what he attempted with Hood. But Hood failed him in the ultimate issue; and the event, which Johnston planned and wished, was not to be. Johnston and Sherman, as great military tacticians, were antagonists worthy each of the other. They were pitted against each other in many indecisive contests, where some extraneous circumstance, beyond the control of either, frustrated their respective plans; and it seems that Death, the great conqueror, at the very end, preserved the impartial balance between them. "By an irony of fate," writes Curry in his later years, "Gen. Johnston, as pall-bearer at the funeral of Gen. Sherman, on a wet and cold day, contracted a cold which resulted in his death."

On the 9th of July, 1864, Johnston reached his fortifications at Atlanta in safety. During the progress of the ensuing siege, Curry went across the country on horseback to Talladega. On the 17th of July, during his absence, Johnston was relieved of the command of the army of the defense, and Hood was put in his place. Soon after Curry

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reached Atlanta, upon his return from Talladega, his office as Commissioner under the Habeas Corpus Act expired by limitation; and at the request of General Joseph Wheeler, he joined that officer as special aide, in an expedition to travel in the rear of Sherman's army, and to cut his communications. It was a congenial duty to the diminutive Confederate General, whose soul was bigger than his body, and who will be remembered in history, not only for his heroic devotion to the cause of the Confederacy, but no less for his loyalty to a reunited country, which made him one of the most picturesque figures in the Spanish-American *emeute* of 1898.

Curry writes of this episode with Wheeler:—

We first struck the road at Dalton, and captured the place after a brisk little engagement, taking about 100 prisoners. . . . Moving up the railroad, and tearing up rails, we encountered some colored troops, the first I had seen. We marched to Cleveland, hoping to cross the Tennessee River; but the late heavy rains had swelled it, so as to be not fordable. We passed through Athens, and some stores were "gutted." On this expedition we were forbidden to encumber horses with any surplus clothing; and we ate just what we "picked up," *en route*. For a portion of the time our principal food was green corn. Gen. Wheeler was compelled to make a wide detour to cross the swollen river, which he finally accomplished, with a little resistance east of Knoxville. While tearing up the railroad at McMillan's Depot, we had a little fight and dispersed the enemy. As the railroad between Chattanooga and Nashville was the line of communication to be cut, the General struck across the country.

He requested me to cross the Clinch River at Clinton, to the right of his line of march, and get what informa-

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tion I could. With a few men I hurried on, and came to a country mill, with a large "overshot" wheel, situated on a beautiful stream of water, and embowered in a dense forest. Two Federal soldiers were captured, and a middle-aged woman, bare-footed, in homespun frock, apparently the owner of the mill, came to the door and accosted me. The door was about ten feet from the ground, and a broad slab was the only means of entrance and exit. Being of Union sympathies, and furious because of the capture of the men, she poured upon my head, vehemently and volubly, a torrent of oaths, the most vulgar, blasphemous and horrid that I ever heard fall from human lips. Threatening me with vengeance from a brigade of soldiers, which she affirmed was nearby, she began to descend the pathway from the mill, without ceasing her vocabulary of opprobrious and disgusting epithets. Riding my horse across the slab, I informed her that she must remain where she was. This infuriated her afresh, and drew upon me another volley, not less offensive and wicked than she had given previously, of her abundant imprecations. Persisting in the avowal of her purpose, I ordered one of my men to tie her, and put her on one of the captured horses, and carry her to headquarters. Quieted and convinced by my calm purpose, she withdrew to the mill, and we pursued our journey. . . .

By the way, the rural population of East Tennessee was unrefined, ignorant, vicious and disloyal to the Confederacy.

Curry, continuing his account of his military experiences of this period, writes:—

We crossed the railroad south of Nashville; but our circuitous journeying and long delay had defeated the project of breaking up communications. Tearing up the road a little, we marched towards Franklin, where we

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had quite a severe engagement, and General Kelly, an accomplished young officer, was mortally wounded. I was in a few paces of him when he was shot. Under a flag of truce General Wheeler requested the kind attentions of Colonel Brownlow, in command of the opposing troops, to his friend and comrade, and it is a proper tribute to Colonel Brownlow to say that the Confederate officer, during his few remaining days, received the kindness that a chivalrous adversary delights to render.

At a little town south of Franklin, we had another engagement; and there I saw women on the streets, in the midst of the fray, cheering our men. The tyranny of Federal occupation drove them nearly to despair. Travelling south, the corps forded the Tennessee River, a dangerous enterprise, below Decatur, Alabama; and while General Wheeler halted to rest his command and await orders and information from Gen. Hood, who had been "flanked" out of Atlanta, and whipped, I made a "flying trip" to Talladega.

On the 6th of October, 1864, Curry started for North Alabama to discharge his duties as Judge Advocate with a military court, composed of General Leroy Pope Walker of Alabama, Colonel Dowd of Mississippi, Colonel House of Tennessee, and another officer.

"We reached Courtland, General Roddy's headquarters," he writes, "on the 17th. Reporting to General Roddy, who greatly desired my presence and assistance, on account of the disturbed state of affairs in North Alabama, I was appointed his aide *pro tempore*. There was much disloyalty in that portion of the State, and the facility of intercourse with the Federal army made cautious dealing very necessary."

On October 30 Generals Hood and Beauregard reached Courtland, *en route* for Nashville. On

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November 2 General Roddy and his staff arrived at Tuscumbia, where Hood was then encamped, and was slowly getting ready for his proposed invasion of Tennessee. General Beauregard had already departed. Curry continues:—

> The difference betwixt his (Hood's) and General Johnston's handling of troops was most manifest. General Hood seemed to be at a loss what to do; and his equipments and appointments, for which no blame attaches to him, were most inadequate.

General Roddy, with his brigade of cavalry, was ordered west, to make observations and to prevent any movement from Memphis. By means of a pontoon bridge, General Hood and his army crossed the Tennessee River to Florence; and on Sunday, November 21, started northwards for Tennessee. Meanwhile Roddy's brigade, to which Curry was attached, remained at Iuka and Corinth. About this time Colonel Josiah Patterson, commanding the Fifth Alabama regiment, was assigned to other duties; and Curry was transferred to the command of the regiment with the rank of lieutenant-colonel. The circumstances of this promotion of one, who was scarcely more than a civilian in experience, were recalled in a letter written in 1897, by Colonel Patterson:—

MEMPHIS, TENN., Oct. 22, 1897.

DR. J. L. M. CURRY,

MY DEAR SIR: Soon after your retirement from the Congress of the Confederate States I met you at General Wheeler's headquarters, when you told me you had entered the army. About that time the Lt. Colonel of my Regiment, the 5th Alabama Cavalry, was appointed Colonel of the 10th Alabama Cavalry, thereby making a

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vacancy in my Regiment. The officers of my Regiment, without exception, waived right to promotion, and you were, by the unanimous request of the officers of the Regiment, promoted to the rank of Lt. Colonel. Subsequently I, with the rank of Colonel, commanded the brigade to which the 5th Alabama Cavalry was attached; and you, with the rank of Lt. Colonel, commanded that Regiment to the close of the war.

Very truly yours,
JOSIAH PATTERSON.

Curry assumed the duties of his new office at Corinth on the 29th; and at dress-parade he made the regiment an address, which was received with the applause that was the usual accompaniment of his oratory and his personal popularity. That his rapid advancement as a soldier was not due to political or other influence than that commanded by his military worth, was later attested by high authority. In a speech on the floor of the House of Representatives of the United States, March 9, 1898, General Joseph Wheeler asserted that Curry had earned his rank by bravery in battle.

With the zeal and industry and adaptability which characterized him in every station in life, he set himself to work at once to become proficient in the art of war.

"I soon mastered Wheeler's Tactics," he writes, "and drilled the Regiment every day, Sundays excepted, when not engaged in active service. The Regiment was undisciplined and badly armed, and not homogeneous. While my relations with the Regiment were pleasant, and I had the entire confidence of officers and men, it was a sore trial to put and keep in 'fighting trim' men who were generally not well officered, and who were

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partially demoralized by serving in the immediate vicinity of their homes and families. It is simple justice, however, to say that I never saw more gallantry and courage than were frequently displayed by some of the officers and men.

"In this connection, I can do no better than stop and pay a just tribute to General Roddy. He has been much misrepresented, and since the war his conduct has not been free from censure. I never witnessed in him any other than a jealous and watchful purpose to serve his country to the best of his ability. He had a difficult command, requiring much tact and patience to manage, and a wide extent of territory to guard; and of his personal courage there can be no question."

On December 24 Curry and his command reached Rogersville in Northern Alabama, near the Tennessee line. Here he was ordered back by General Hood, who had only a few days before fought the disastrous battles of Franklin and Nashville. Curry accordingly fell back on the 25th, moving in a southwestward direction to Florence. It was a cold, wet day; and there was scarcely a mouthful of food for either men or horses. "I have no pleasant associations," he declares, "of that Christmas." Thousands of soldiers were retreating from Tennessee in confusion and disorder; and the roads were so cut up by wagons and artillery as to be almost impassable.

On December 29th, 1864, Curry's regiment marched to Pond Spring, east of Courtland; and on the next day, with about one hundred men, he fought a regiment of Federal cavalry, and was driven back to Courtland.

"Infantry and cavalry," he states, "were completely

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demoralized, regarding our defeat as accomplished and resistance as hopeless. With such men as I could organize I had several skirmishes with Yankees,—very nearly escaping capture, as the enemy charged within a few paces and fired in very uncomfortable proximity. I should have surrendered, but that I dreaded the imprisonment and the separation from my family."

From the first to the tenth of January, 1865, Curry and the enemy played at hide and seek in Northern Alabama, through Franklin, Lawrence and Morgan counties. One night he enjoyed the luxury of a bed in Newburg, at the house of Mr. McCaughey, the father of his adjutant. About the twelfth of the month Colonel Patterson rejoined the regiment, near Sim's Mill in Morgan County; and Curry's labors and anxieties as commanding officer were relieved.

On the 20th of the month Curry learned of the extreme illness of his wife, and started home, in company with two gentlemen of the name of Orr, who lived near Danville, Alabama. He reached home on the 23rd, where he remained till the 31st. On that date, with a sense of duty impelling him to return to the front, he left, and never saw his wife again. Reaching the camp at Sim's Mill on February 3, he was once more put in command of his regiment, a portion of which was employed in guarding a long stretch of the river.

On March 16, 1865, he was assigned command in North Alabama, having under him the Fifth Alabama Cavalry and Stewart's Battalion. At that time a cavalry corps, under the Federal General Wilson, was preparing for a raid through Alabama. By courier-line Curry reported nearly every day to

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General Wirt Adams, at Montevallo. On the 25th, in obedience to orders, he moved southwards. At Elyton, on the afternoon of the 28th, the Federals came into the town just as Curry's force had passed. A half hour later he would have been intercepted. On the 30th Colonel Patterson resumed command; and Curry, asking for and obtaining a detail, concealed himself near the road, in order to get information concerning the strength of the enemy. He counted nearly four thousand, and reported to General Forrest, who was advancing to meet the foe. Wilson's whole command numbered nearly ten thousand men. Curry, being cut off by the delay in counting, had to make a wide detour, and was unable to join the main body of the Confederates for two days. Overtaking General Forrest's command, and rejoining his own on April 1, he was ordered to protect the rear of the Confederate column.

"Deploying what men I had," he writes, "I skirmished with the enemy through Plantersville, slowly falling back to give the wagons time to get out of the way. While resisting the attack, a ball, with a heavy thump, struck and entered my haversack, perforating my coat, breaking a hair-brush, and making sixty holes in a New York *Tribune*, which I had been carrying for two weeks without an opportunity to open and read. This paper, now in the Confederate Museum at Richmond, undoubtedly saved my life. When Greeley was a candidate for the Presidency, I sent him by a friend a jocular message, that if elected he could not take the oath of office, as he had certainly given 'aid and comfort' to his country's enemy."

On Sunday, April 2, 1865, Curry was the last man to enter the breastworks at Selma, where he

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found General Forrest's troops posted, awaiting the Federal attack. In a few minutes the enemy appeared in front; and, after reconnoissance, attacked in force, quite to Curry's left, where Armstrong's brigade was stationed. The firing was very heavy for twenty or thirty minutes; then the Federals charged the breastworks, and driving the Confederates pell-mell, followed the fugitives into Selma, killing and capturing the larger part of them. The Confederate command, hemmed in by the Alabama and Cahawba Rivers, was in desperate straits, from which it might escape only with great difficulty.

Curry, who makes record of the episode as including "the most terrible night of his life," says:—

I held my position, not violently assailed, until the enemy had gotten betwixt me and the town. Seeing everything in confusion, and our army routed, my men became uncontrollable, and sought safety. With a squad adhering to me, I crossed the fortifications, as to go into Selma was capture or death. Avoiding the road, on which were Federal troops, I soon found myself in the woods, and in a swamp. May I be spared from such another night! The Federals fired the government buildings, the foundries and naval works and magazines, which amid the awful explosions ignited and consumed the business portion of the city. The din was fearful. The rattle of musketry, the music of brass bands, the explosion of shells, the shrieks of women, made a second Tophet. The burning town made an illumination which extended for several miles. Amid the hurrahing of victors, and the tramping of pursuers and pursued, I walked nearly the whole night. The next day, avoiding the scouts of the cavalry, I found my way to Mr. Mims', and spent the night.

The next day, with two men, I lay in the woods. At

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night, as the country was full of cavalry, we travelled; and just at day I paid a negro five dollars in Confederate money,—all of any kind I had,—to put us across Cahawba River in a canoe. A young horse, which Mr. Mims loaned me, swam by the boat. On the west bank of the river we were safe. My two companions soon left me, and I rode to Marion. On the street I met Judge Porter King, who invited me to his house, and fed myself and horse. I found in the town General Forrest, who had effected his escape from Selma; and I promptly reported to him for duty.

Curry spent a period of several days, extending from the 8th to the 14th of April, at Greensboro, Alabama, in collecting what remained of his scattered command. On the 14th he received orders to muster his forces in the vicinity of Montevallo or Elyton, and to guard the prairie country against any approach of the enemy from the direction of the Tennessee River. The orders were from Forrest, and were characteristic; for they contained the further instruction that Curry was to report to General Dick Taylor at Meridian, to General Adams at Montgomery, or to Forrest himself at Gainesville, or wherever he might establish his headquarters. Colonel Stewart was to report to Curry; and Curry, in addition to "guarding the prairie-country" with his scanty and disorganized troops, was to establish a courier-line from Greensboro to Talladega,—a distance of over a hundred miles.

Everything was in great confusion and turmoil; but in the midst of it, officers and soldiers alike were in happy ignorance that General Lee had already surrendered at Appomattox on the 9th of the month, to an overwhelming enemy, what was

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left of the Army of Northern Virginia,—a ragged and starved and footsore remnant of "that incomparable array of bright bayonets and tattered uniforms," whose fidelity and courage continued unfailing to the end.

On the morning of April 17, while trying to get his wagons and men across the flush and flooded Cahawba River at Centreville, Curry received by private messenger the intelligence that his wife had died on April 8, nine days before; and that her death had been hastened by a current and apparently authentic report that her husband had been killed at the battle of Selma. It was a tragic ending to a union that had been a very happy one.

"She was a pure, noble Christian woman, and a devoted wife," is the tribute which he pays to her memory. "For eighteen years our lives had run peacefully and happily together. No woman sympathized more heartily with the Confederacy, or labored more self-denyingly for the soldiers and their families. My wife was a member of the Presbyterian Church."

Stricken sorely in his affections, and with the cause, that he held close at heart, in apparently desperate emergency, and in reality already lost, he started homeward on a journey that enabled his official duty to coincide with his desire to be with his family.

"Turning over my little command to Colonel Stewart," he writes, "I proceeded to reconnoitre and locate the proposed line of couriers, and to look after my motherless children,—Susie Lamar and Manly Bowie. I reached Talladega and my home on the 18th, the day of Johnston's surrender to Sherman. As I neared my home, my slaves

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ran up the road to greet me, with sympathy at my loss and gladness at my return."

On April 21 a brigade of Federal cavalry passed through Talladega.

"Gathering a few soldiers," says Curry, "I counted them, and then watched their movements, to report. While in a lane, I captured a Federal soldier, and took his mule and arms. As I was protecting my prisoner from the thoughtless insults of the men who were with me, I was very near being shot. Unnoticed, another Federal soldier had approached within thirty yards of me. When I discovered him he was taking deliberate aim at me. Gathering my bridle and spurring my horse, I charged upon him, and fired my pistol. He fled and I was only too glad of an opportunity to escape, as several of his companions were in sight."

A Federal garrison, under General Crysler of New York, occupied Talladega on May 13th. To this command, Curry, having learned of Lee's surrender at Appomattox and of Johnston's in North Carolina, and realizing that the great struggle was at an end, reported and surrendered; and was paroled. By order of General Canby, he was arrested on the 30th of the same month; but was again discharged on his personal parole the same day.

"The arrest," he states, "grew out of a 'cock and bull story' in the New York *Tribune*, that I had favored the assassination of Lincoln and the cruel treatment of Federal prisoners. General Crysler treated me uniformly with consideration and kindness; but he was accused, and probably not wrongfully, of levying 'blackmail' on citizens, and taking cotton for his own use. His quartermaster took corn and forage and meat from me without

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the slightest compensation, and a Michigan regiment robbed me of three mules in open daylight. Of course the rascals charged 'Uncle Sam' for these purchases."

Talladega County was now under martial law; and the people were so crushed that even a corporal could commit almost any depredation upon persons or property with entire impunity. "The Freedman's Bureau was instituted," says Curry, "and some of the fanatical or corrupt agents sought to make masters support their former slaves, or divide with them their property. Generally, the negroes behaved well. Mine, with one exception, remained on the place as usual. I stayed at home quietly on my farm with my two children."

In September, 1865, a bill of information was filed against Curry in the Federal District Court at Montgomery, for the confiscation of his property, on the grounds that he had been engaged in armed rebellion against the United States; that he had subscribed largely to the Confederate Cotton Loan; that he had furnished money, provisions, clothing, and other materials for the use of persons engaged in the "rebellion," and that he had used and circulated the paper currency and bonds of the State of Alabama and of the Confederacy, said notes and bonds having been issued for the purpose of waging war against the United States Government.

"This information from the District Attorney," says Curry, "was never served on me by the Marshal, but was returned as executed; and I was thus at the mercy of as despicable and unprincipled a set of adventurers and robbers as ever, under official sanction, plundered a helpless people. I employed Judge William R. Chilton to look after my interests; and he compromised with the

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officials, 'hungry as dogs and merciless as wolves,' by the payment of $250, the receipt for which lying before me, is the evidence of the robbery."

In October, Curry went to Washington to obtain a pardon, travelling by way of Chattanooga, Nashville, Louisville and Cincinnati. East Tennessee was not considered even at that time altogether safe for persons who had been in active sympathy with the Confederate cause; and hence Curry's wide detour to reach the capitol.

"On the 22nd," he writes, "I arrived at the capitol city, Congress being in session. On the 23rd, unattended by any person, I saw the Attorney General and President Johnson. The latter received me courteously and kindly. To my application for pardon, he made no immediate reply; but talked freely about the condition of the country and the state of feeling at the South.

"On my rising to leave, he expressed a wish for a further conversation, and told me to call next morning at the State Department, and the pardon would be ready for me. In Congress I had had a pleasant but not intimate acquaintance with the President, when he was a Senator from Tennessee. I was, of course, prompt in calling on the 24th at the State Department, then in the upper portion of the Treasury Building; and after making and signing the required oath, the pardon, with the signatures of the President and of 'W. Hunter, acting Secretary of State,' attested by the Great Seal, was handed to me."

As pertinent to his subsequent relations with the Federal Government, in whose service he later occupied a distinguished position, it may be stated here that it was not until February 27, 1877, that the United States Senate passed the bill under which

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Curry's political disabilities were removed. The signing of this bill on March 2 was one of the last official acts of President Grant.

On the same day that he received his pardon, he started South for Richmond; and travelling thence he reached his home in Talladega on the last day of the month.

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CHAPTER XII

PEACE AND SERVICE

BEFORE the War between the States politics had absorbed the time and attention of most thoughtful men in Alabama and the lower South, but it was politics of a high kind. The war-smitten people of that region were now to grapple for their very social existence with another and inconceivably degraded form of politics. For six years, during the fateful period of Reconstruction, fuller of bitterness and suffering and degradation than the fewer years of battle and defeat, they experienced poverty and detraction and woe under the vicious rule of the carpet-bagger, the "scalawag" and the newly-enfranchised negro. Of the evil domination of the State by the creatures of the Freedman's Bureau, and of its looting by legislatures composed of negroes and their more offensive and reckless white allies, space in this narrative does not admit the telling. The awful mistake of the reconstruction theory, now universally admitted, and the eternal infamy of the reconstruction period are written in indelible letters upon the life of the South. Its influences must be inferred rather than discussed in these pages.

In November of 1865, Curry, with his heart set upon the cause of religion as the one eternal thing to which a man of soul could repair amid the overthrow of all old standards, attended the Baptist State Con-

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vention at Marion, Alabama, and was elected its presiding officer. During the session of the convention, the trustees of Howard College, then located at Marion, a small college set up by the Baptist people, elected him President of that institution. At this time, as may naturally be supposed, the finances of the school were at a low ebb and on an uncertain basis. But there were those who realized, as defeated peoples have done in many ages, that the resuscitation of their impoverished and prostrate country lay in the hope of educating the unvanquished boys and girls, with a new world awaiting their activities. Out of the abundance of their poverty these people subscribed with generous unselfishness to the guarantee of the President's salary, which was fixed at $5,000 in currency, or $3,500 in gold.

Curry accepted the Presidency of the college, and removed in December, 1865, to Marion, taking with him his son, Manly, then a boy eight or nine years of age, whose sister, Susie, a young girl of fifteen, had in the preceding October been entered as a pupil in the Judson Female Institute, in the same town.

Curry writes of his work in connection with the college:—

> Most of my time, after a little teaching in moral and mental science, and political economy, was given to travel through the States, and public addresses in behalf of the college and general education. . . . During the year I visited Selma, Montgomery, Tuskegee, Jacksonville, Talladega, Mobile, Gainesville, and Mississippi.

On the 28th of January, 1866, he was ordained to the gospel ministry; and, as a fitting accompaniment to the statement of so serious and important an

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event in his life, his own account of his religious history and experience may be here appropriately set down:—

"In early life," he writes, "my parents were not Christians, although moral, upright and regular attendants on religious worship. The only denominations in the lower part of Lincoln County were Methodists and Baptists. I remember to have heard George F. Pierce, the Bishop, when he was a young man. The first missionary sermon I ever heard was at Double Branch meeting-house, by Dr. C. Mallory. It was in the week, drew a large audience, and produced a profound impression. The Baptist preachers I remember were Adams, a colored man, who preached acceptably to white people, Taylor, Juriah Harris, and John L. West. The last was often at my father's. My father's house was always a welcome and hospitable home for all preachers.

"There were no Sunday Schools near me when I was young. In fact, I never was a member of a Sunday school until I was married. In early youth I had no distinctive religious impressions or convictions. My sensibilities and emotions were sometimes awakened, but were physical excitements and had no religious basis. All my life I was outwardly moral. I never uttered an oath, and never gambled, although I learned to play cards when I was eight or nine years old. When at college, I attended church, more because it was a college regulation and to see the girls than for any other purpose. I used to hear Dr. Hoyt, Drs. Curry (now—1877—of New York), Means, Smith, Longstreet, Chambliss, Albert Williams, Branham, &c. Of the Bible, I was stupidly ignorant. During college, I had, as most boys have at some period of their lives, skeptical notions; but I was afraid of them, and deliberately burned, without reading, Paine's 'Age of Reason,' which a class-mate gave to me.

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"When at the Law School, I heard Theodore Parker, Dr. Walker, Dr. Kirk, and Baron Stow; but had no convictions of sin, nor desire for salvation.

"After my return from the Mexican War, there was a protracted meeting at Kelly's Springs, and my father was baptized. His baptism made a deep impression on me. During the meeting I was admitted into the church, and was baptized by Elder Samuel Henderson. . . . I have never had any rapturous experiences, any overpowering views of my sinfulness of forgiveness; and to this day, with humiliation I record it, I have never had any special satisfaction in partaking of the Lord's Supper. I know the depravity of my heart, the need of regeneration, my utter inability to change my own heart and character. I believe the Bible, the atonement of Christ, its all sufficiency, and rely simply on Christ's work and grace for salvation. I find most contentment in working for my Master, although I am sure there is no meritoriousness, as procuring salvation, in any human righteousness. I have often wished and prayed for the experiences that some Christians have; but they have been denied me, or possibly, by unbelief I have denied them to myself.

"In 1847, I attended the Alabama Baptist State Convention at Greensboro, Alabama, and was on the Committee on Education. In 1848, and for several successive years, I was a delegate to Coosa River Association, and was the Clerk of the body, writing many of the reports, four of which bear my name. In 1856 I was elected Moderator and so continued when present. In 1856 the East Alabama Baptist Convention was organized, and I was elected President for two or three sessions. In 1865, and for a few sessions thereafter, I was elected President of the Alabama Baptist State Convention.

"During these various years, I taught in Sunday Schools, made missionary and other religious addresses, conducted prayer-meetings, and sometimes delivered

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what are called exhortations. I may have been called an active lay-member. Once, by my Church, I was chosen deacon and declined. During the war, when in command of my regiment, I sometimes, in the absence of the chaplain, or in default of one, addressed my men on practical religion.

"In the summer of 1865, at Refuge Church, in Talladega County, Rev. William McCain, the pastor, induced me to preach my first regular sermon. In August and September I aided J. J. D. Renfroe, my pastor, and Dr. Spalding, in a meeting in Talladega town. A spectacle, novel and interesting, was that of a Confederate soldier and a Federal soldier, who walked into the water, hand in hand. In September, I aided the same brethren and Brother O. Welch, the pastor, in a meeting at Talladega (now Alpine) church. In December, I assisted Dr. W. H. McIntosh in a meeting at Marion, Alabama. All these meetings were highly successful.

"I have been invited (I write this on 22 March, 1877) to pastorates in Selma, Montgomery, Mobile, Atlanta, Augusta, Wilmington, Raleigh, New Orleans, Memphis, St. Louis, San Francisco, Louisville, Norfolk, Richmond, Baltimore, New York, Boston and Brooklyn; but I have had no inclination or conviction that it was my duty to become exclusively a preacher. At times I love to preach, and I am profoundly convinced that sacerdotal ideas connected with the ministry, or preaching, have been productive of untold evil."

The intimacy, simplicity and candor of this statement not only reveal the pre-occupation of serious minded men of that age in religious matters, but constitute of themselves a sufficient warranty that Curry's discharge of the duties of his most high and sacred office was conscientious and earnest. Although he declined invitation after invitation of the

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most flattering character to accept a regular pastorate, he continued nevertheless to do a great deal of preaching. One hundred and nineteen sermons were delivered by him during the first year of his ministry, —an extraordinary intellectual feat, apart from the devotion which it illustrates; while, in addition, he made numerous addresses at prayer-meetings, Sunday Schools, associations, conventions and mass-meetings. He visited Richmond, Baltimore and Washington, and spoke on education and missions. He had beaten the sword of the soldier into the reaping-hook of a spiritual harvest, wherein he labored with an industry and persistence which vindicated his assertion that he "loved to preach." The influence of the preacher upon the life of the South is a story not yet adequately told. It may be doubted if the world has quite appreciated the singular religious quality of the Southern people and their leaders both in their military struggle and in the period of grim endurance after the conflict. Great revivals frequently swept the armies and preachers turned caissons into pulpits. From the ministry such officers as Pendleton, Lowry, Evans, Capers, Mell, Shoup, Dabney, Harrison, Willis, Peterkin, Polk, Smith, and Chapman entered the army and attained great distinction, and great preachers like Early, Quintard, Marvin, Pierce, Doggett, Palmer, the Hoges, Jeter, Burrows, the Rylands, Broadus, Minnegerode, Duncan, Father Ryan, shared with the military leaders the admiration and esteem of the soldiers in the ranks. The spectacle of Jackson and Gordon holding torches, in order that the Chaplain might read the Scriptures to the fierce veterans of the eastern armies,

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recalls Cromwell and his Ironsides in another age of deep feeling and high purpose. Near the beginning of the year 1866 Curry was invited to become a co-secretary of the American Baptist Home Mission Society,—one of the most distinguished and important offices of his church; in the following June he was asked to assume the pastorate of the Selma Baptist Church at a salary of $4,000; and at other times during the year he received calls from the Coliseum Baptist Church, in New Orleans, the Second Baptist Church in Richmond, and the Franklin Square Baptist Church in Baltimore. In November, at the Alabama Baptist State Convention, he was re-elected President of that body.

This is the record of a busy man, honorably, usefully and hopefully employed, and of a tough and vital nature, steeped in moral purpose, that could thus turn without complaint or cynicism from the excitements and ambitions of war and statesmanship to quieter and humbler, but essentially greater, projects of rebuilding and social service. No morbid despair of life, no idle regret for lost and now unavailing causes, no surrender to the adversities and calamities which had befallen him, almost before his prime, possessed the soul of Curry. Undaunted and undismayed, he buckled on the whole armor of faith, and in his works honored God and aided his fellow-man with a will that defeat could not check nor humiliation daunt. Nor were his energies and efforts confined to the assistance and amelioration of those who with himself had been cast down in the wreck of a great struggle. He turned himself in helpful sympathy to the ignorant and humble race, out of whose seeming triumph came to be

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wrought an Ilium of woes; and whose new-found friends had laid upon unprepared shoulders a double burden of freedom and of enfranchisement. With the tenderness and affection for the black man which the typical Southern slaveholder preserved to the end, and which the typical Southern slave rewarded with a fidelity and devotion that is unparalleled in the history of the world,—a tenderness which the alien will never comprehend, and a devotion which will never cease to astonish the outsider,—Curry was, from the moment of the fall of the Confederacy, occupied in mind and heart with the probable future of these people. On May 15th, 1866, he held a conference at Marion with Messrs. McIntosh and Raymond, the pastors of the local Baptist and Presbyterian Churches, with reference to the education of the freedmen of the town. They agreed upon a town-meeting, to be held on the 17th of the month; and on that day a preliminary gathering took place, whose object was to devise ways and means towards this desired end. Shortly afterwards, another meeting was held, at which Curry, supported by the two ministers already mentioned, and by ex-Governor Andrew B. Moore, prepared and introduced resolutions favoring the education of the colored people by the white people of the South. It was a wise and prescient act upon his part; and in dealing with the proposition he took an advanced position beyond that of most of his Southern contemporaries, many of whom were paralyzed with fear and wonder at the sudden injection of a great mass of ignorance "into the belly of the constitution." But Curry met the exigency of the situation with the judgment, the courage, the faith and the

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energy that had characterized his earlier career; and for it, in the end, he received his rich reward.

In this year of 1866, he began to keep regularly a record or diary; and the little leather-bound pocket-books contain many entries that bring the past days of a notable but disjointed and despairing period and a noble career vividly before the reader's eyes. Among many other details of this critical year after the war, when despair and hope alternately swayed the Southern balances, we find him writing cheerfully and without repining. Not a few of these entries are quite insignificant, alone and in themselves; but they go together to show the equal temper of his heart and mind, his quick interest in the life about him, his zest for work, and may thus serve to illustrate his character and conduct:—

Saturday, February 3 (Entry made at Meridian, Miss.) Carpet-sack taken from me by mistake, with clothes and all my sermons. Left for Mobile at 5 P. M.

Tuesday, February 6. Called on Miss Augusta Evans.

Saturday, February 10. Called with Miss Augusta Evans on Mrs. Chandron, who translated Joseph II,—a most accomplished and pleasant woman.

Monday, February 12. Spent Monday night at Mr. Evans',—the father of Miss Augusta J. Evans, author of Inez, Beulah, Macaria and St. Elmo.

Saturday, March 31. Took tea at General Lawler's with General Willis Bocock and Prof. A. J. Battle.

Tuesday, April 3. At 3.30 P. M. delivered a "little" lecture to the students of Howard.

Wednesday, April 11. (Entry made at Tuskegee, Ala.) Dined with Mr. McDonald. Met Mrs. Covington (*née* Miss Bussy), who knew my father and mother before marriage, and my grandfather and mother, and great-

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grandmother, who would never ride, but was a great pedestrian. My mother, when a girl, was cheerful and lively.

Monday, May 14. Informed of a contemplated duel, and mediation requested.

Wednesday, May 16. Officiated for the first time in marrying a couple, Marion M. Burch of Kentucky and Ella L. Curry. Spent the night at Jabez Curry's.

Monday, May 21. Left Marion at 6 A. M. Reached Selma at 9.20 A. M. Preached at night and baptized two young boys. This was my first administration of the ordinance.

Friday, June 1. Duel between M. P. Kennon and Capt. Frank Lumpkin. Two shots. No damage. Adjustment.

Friday, August 31. Invitation to Presidency of Richmond College.

Wednesday, September 12. Reached Montgomery at 9 A. M. Called with Judge Chilton, at 12 M., on Governor Patton, just returned from Chicago,—the "inauguration" of the Douglas monument. The Governor hopeful as to political affairs; Chief Justice Walker despondent.

Tuesday, October 9. Commenced teaching in College. Recitations in Moral and Intellectual Philosophy and Rhetoric.

Sunday, November 18. (Entry made in Richmond.) Preached at Second Baptist Church at 11 A. M.

Assisted in communion service at First Baptist Church at 4 P. M., and talked to converts.

Dr. Steel and Messrs. Farrer, Courtney and Ellyson, a committee of the Second Baptist Church, waited on me with a request to accept pastorate.

Preached at night in First Baptist Church to a large congregation. Drs. Stiles, Ryland and Burrows on the stand.

A busy day, surely!

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More than ten years later Curry wrote again, under date of that same full day, in one of the little brown leather-backed diaries:—

> On the 18th of November, happy day, I was accepted by Mary W. Thomas. I have had occasion, every day since, to thank God for this great goodness. I can recall the very spot where my proposal was acceded to.

On Tuesday, January 8, 1867, he made the following entry in his diary:—

> Weighed to-day 157 pounds;—more than I ever weighed before.

On 28th February, 1867, in his official capacity of President of Howard College, he entered into correspondence with Mr. Robert C. Winthrop, with reference to the Peabody donation, a gift of three millions of dollars by which Mr. George Peabody of Massachusetts established what became known as the Peabody Education Fund. This correspondence was the beginning of a later very close personal and official relationship between the two men, the details of which are to be found in subsequent chapters of this narrative.

In March of this year he was instructed by the trustees of his college, who armed him at the same time with a resolution of their confidence, to visit Virginia and Baltimore, for the purpose of securing some part, if possible, of the Peabody Fund for their own institution. Accordingly he set out for Richmond about the middle of the month, spending some days on the way, and remaining in Virginia only a short time. He appears to have been sick during a portion of this trip; and he did not reach

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Baltimore as he had contemplated. At the end of the first week in April he was again at Marion; and there is no record in his journals and notes of any fruitful results of the journey.

On June 17, 1867, he set out for another trip to Virginia, which had in view a different object than procuring aid for Howard College from the Peabody Fund. He travelled tranquilly, as one with a serene and untroubled mind, who having earned some days of leisure, proposed to enjoy them. He stopped at various places on his way northward. Among others, he was at Charlottesville on the 21st.

"I visited the University in the afternoon," he wrote in his diary; in which he always alludes to Jefferson's great educational institution at Charlottesville as "the University," apparently taking it for granted, as did most Southerners, and all Virginians, that there could be no difficulty in recognizing its identity. While in Charlottesville he visited the grave of Jefferson, in the graveyard on the mountain side; and Monticello, where the "sentinel over the rights of men" had spent his last years in his home upon the summit of the Little Mountain.

On the next day after his visit to Jefferson's house and burial-place, he reached Richmond.

The entries in the little brown-backed books had during the preceding months contained frequent mention of "M. W. T.", and of a correspondence in which the owner of those initials was a participant; and on the 18th of the preceding November,—"happy day!"—it showed the record of his engagement. So that the reader, who has followed these pages, may reasonably have surmised ere this, that

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Curry was visiting Richmond to be present at his own wedding.

On June 25, 1867, he and Miss Mary W. Thomas were married. She was the daughter of Mr. James Thomas, a prominent business man of Richmond, whom Curry, when a Confederate Congressman, had met, as he records, with her parents and numerous sisters, under a tree on the lawn of Mr. Thomas' residence, upon a certain summer's day, when she was "a sweet, beautiful girl of seventeen." The marriage ceremony was performed at 8.30 P.M., as he punctiliously relates, in the First Baptist Church, with Rev. William D. Thomas and Dr. J. L. Burrows officiating. A large and brilliant assemblage witnessed the solemn ceremony; and the bridegroom writes that besides the officiating ministers, there were present on the platform, as interested spectators, Doctors Jeter, Ryland, T. G. Jones and Shaver, and Reverend Messrs. Grimsby, Hume, and Morgan of England.

"From that day," says Curry in 1877, "our lives have flowed happily together, like two streams whose waters are indissolubly blended. Not a harsh word has ever passed the lips of either, nor an unkind thought been harbored for a moment in either heart. Now, after ten years of union, I can bless God for such a gift, and truly say that earth contains not a wiser, purer, nobler, better woman."

Surely no wife ever won a finer tribute than that!

An hour or two after their marriage Curry and his wife left Richmond for New York; and thence, on Saturday, June 29, they set sail for Europe. In the party were William D. Thomas, Dr. J. M. Williams of Baltimore, Professor Huntingdon, Rev. Thomas

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Hume, Jr., of Portsmouth, Dr. G. W. Samson and his family, and Messrs. Wheeler, Johnson and Farnham, all of whom appear to have been friends or acquaintances of Curry's, and whose presence he notes in his diary.

Their trip abroad, which was not so common an experience as it is to-day, covered a period of four months, and included England, Scotland, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, Italy and France.

On July 13, runs the diary, they were at Westminster Palace, Westminster Abbey, and the British Museum; on the next day, Sunday, they heard with interest a sermon from Spurgeon. In Italy, on the 24th, they visited Pompeii, and climbed Vesuvius; at Florence, on August 1, they traversed the galleries of the Uffizi and Pitti palaces, and dwelt with unaccustomed eyes upon the glories of an ancient and unexcelled art; and there they visited the American sculptor, Hiram Powers, in his studio. On August 23, still following the now beaten track of the later tourist, they returned to Paris, where they remained until October 5, in attendance upon the Exposition and visiting the various places in its vicinity of historical or artistic interest. Here, in Paris, after a lapse of years, Curry makes record that he heard Patti sing again, with a charm that had lost nothing of its delight since he had heard her, ten years earlier, in Washington. Setting their faces homeward, by way of England, the Currys once more heard Spurgeon in his great London Tabernacle; and had the pleasure of making his personal acquaintance.

The travellers reached New York October 28, whence they went straight to Richmond, where they tarried only a few days, and arrived at Marion early

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in November. The next month he attended the State Baptist Convention at Mobile, and was again and for the third time elected its President.

His "love of preaching" meanwhile continued a potent influence with him. Indeed, "love of preaching" but mildly expresses the deepest impulse of the man's nature, which was to teach and move his fellows. During 1867, in spite of his wanderings and various distractions, he preached forty sermons,—one of which was in Paris, and another in Edinburgh; and delivered forty-two addresses and lectures.

On July 10, while he was off the coast of Ireland, in his trip abroad, he was honored with the degree of Doctor of Laws by Mercer University, Georgia, of which he made record in his notes, with many exclamation points.

> Mercer University, Georgia, conferred on me, to-day, the Degree of Doctor of Laws!!!!

The later months of 1867 and the earlier ones of 1868 were busily occupied by Curry, who in addition to the duties of his collegiate office, was engaged in travelling here and there, and preaching and making addresses before religious and educational gatherings. At Talladega, on January 13, yielding to the earnest persuasion of his old friends and former constituents, he made a speech in opposition to the adoption of the Reconstruction State Constitution. The constitution was legally defeated by the terms of the Congressional enabling act, which required that a majority of the registered vote should be cast; but the Congress, with ruthless disregard of its own act, admitted Alabama into the Union under an unadopted reconstruction con-

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stitution; and with it, put in authority a State government, of whom the Lieutenant-Governor, Applegate of Ohio, the Secretary of State, Miller of Maine, the Auditor, Reynolds of Maine, and the Commissioner of Revenue, Keiffer of Ohio, were all officials of the Freedman's Bureau. In the county, in which the State capitol was located, the Reconstructionists nominated a ticket, which was a fair example of others in counties where the Freedman's Bureau most flourished. Their candidates for the legislature were a citizen of Ohio, an Austrian, and three negroes; and those for the county offices of Probate Judge, Clerk of the Circuit Court and Sheriff were all Northerners.

Curry wrote of his speech against the Black and Tan Constitution of Alabama, in 1877, that it was "the only political speech he had made since the War"; but he had made up his mind to get away from the ocean of political degradation and misrule that surrounded him, whose current of iniquity he was powerless to stem. On April 21, 1868, within three months after the election, Curry resigned the Presidency of Howard College. On the 27th, at the urgent request of several of his friends, he withdrew his resignation, provisionally; but, in fact, he never acted in an official capacity for the institution afterwards. An unusual sense of profound disheartenment seems to have come upon him in the contemplation of his surroundings. For once his buoyant spirit lacked resiliency. "The country was too bankrupt," he wrote, "and the political outlook too discouraging, to make a continuance of efforts for endowment desirable."

Long after his State had resumed her position of

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honor and dignity in the galaxy of Commonwealths under the rule of her own people, and when her coal and iron had made her a center of interest to the industrial world, Curry made final record in 1901 of his reasons for leaving Alabama:—

> No man ever had truer or more devoted friends than honored me with their confidence in Alabama, and it was with deep reluctance that I turned my face away from the State of my boyhood and manhood, which still holds my paramount affection. It seemed unwise to keep my wife and children under radical misrule, and to remain where a generation or more would be needed to recover from the disastrous consequences of the War and hostile legislation.

It is manifest that a sharp conflict arose in his mind between his duty to his region, which he had served so faithfully and which had trusted him so completely, and his duty to his young wife who had joined her fortunes to his.

The claims of wife and children prevailed.

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CHAPTER XIII

IN THE OLD DOMINION

It will be recalled that in 1866 Curry had been offered the presidency of Richmond College,—an honor which was declined at the time of its tender. But, when upon his return from Europe in October, 1867, he was notified of his appointment to the chair of History and English Literature in the same institution, he appears to have regarded the proposition with a more favorable consideration. Yet it is scarcely probable that this invitation was in any large sense a determining factor in his removal from Alabama, where he had resided for thirty years. The social and political conditions of reconstruction, which Virginia had so far escaped, and family considerations were the compelling motives, as he has himself recorded, which finally induced his determination to leave his former home.

With his family, he reached Richmond, which thenceforward became his residence, on the 3rd of May, 1868; and leaving his son and daughter there at the house of his father-in-law, Mr. Thomas, he went with Mrs. Curry to Baltimore, to attend the Southern Baptist Convention, which was to meet in that city on the 7th. According to previous arrangement he was to preach the introductory sermon before the Convention; but this plan was prevented by a singular accident. As they were

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approaching Baltimore, at a point six miles from the city, between it and the Relay House, Mrs. Curry, who was seated by her husband's side in the carriage, was struck on the head by a stone, weighing some four pounds, which was hurled at the occupants of the vehicle by some undiscovered ruffian; and her skull was fractured.

"At first," writes Curry, "I thought that she had been shot with a pistol; and did not learn the extent of the injury until, on arriving at the Eutaw House, Dr. R. N. Smith, the eminent surgeon, came out and informed me. She did not recover consciousness until the 9th. We had the sympathy and proffers of service from hosts of friends."

No clue to the perpetrator of this outrage, nor motive for its commission was ever discovered; but it had the effect of disarranging all of Curry's plans; and it was not until the 9th of the month, two days after the Convention had assembled, that he appeared before it, and made an address in behalf of the Greenville Theological Seminary. His recent experiences in Alabama had profoundly impressed him with the need of providing religious instruction for the newly-emancipated slaves; and we find him soon after his visit to Baltimore, and the accident to Mrs. Curry, addressing a mass-meeting of Baptists in Richmond, and urging upon his auditors the importance of the Southern people putting forth more vigorous efforts for giving the negroes a proper religious education. In the meantime he was still "preaching,"—filling, as opportunity offered or occasion demanded, the various pulpits of Drs. Fuller, Williams, and Hatcher. The astounding readiness with which, without technical preparation, he was

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able to "preach" to the delight of great critical audiences in the big cities proves again the contention that the man's overmastering impulse was didactic. He *had* to preach—from some sort of rostrum.

His summer of this year was more or less uneventful. In June he was in New York City, preaching in the Madison Avenue Church, and receiving and considering certain tentative propositions, looking to his acceptance of its pastorate, as the successor of Dr. H. G. Weston, who had been called to the Presidency of Crozer Theological Seminary. Later he attended sundry association meetings; and on the 13th of July, 1868, he signified at last his formal acceptance of a professorship in Richmond College.

For a number of successive summers after the close of the War between the States, the Greenbrier White Sulphur Springs was the rendezvous of many men and women who had been conspicuous for their devotion and services to the Confederacy; and, in the simple surroundings of the place, the most refined and gracious and intelligent society of what was left of the old South, was accustomed to gather for a brief and unostentatious annual recreation. Thither Curry went in the latter part of August, and spent a week; and among his former associates, acquaintances and friends, found there Commodore Matthew F. Maury, General Robert E. Lee, General P. G. T. Beauregard, General John Echols, Governor Pickens of South Carolina, Governor Letcher of Virginia, Senator Allen T. Caperton, Mr. Alexander H. H. Stuart, and Mr. Alexander H. Stephens. With the tremendous tragedy of the War immediately behind them, it may be well imagined that these illustrious partici-

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pants in its tremendous endeavors and failures, found much to recall of the past, and no less to hope and plan for in the future. One wishes that such a vivid talker and keen observer as Curry had handed down to us some transcript of the talk of this unusual company. They had been actors in a great tragic enterprise and had failed, but they were not broken soldiers of fortune or disappointed adventurers. Indeed they came nearer to being martyrs than adventurers—martyrs to idealism and to love of home and locality; or else unworldly champions of an idea which seemed to them finer than life. Millions of silent, proud people still loved and trusted them. They were beginning life over again with erect heads, and most of them, as poorly paid public servants in the fields of education or industry.

The great dining hall of the famous hotel was filled one evening when a gentleman in gray clothes entered with a friend and was proceeding modestly to a seat. Suddenly some one silently rose as he passed, and, as if by magic, the whole company rose without noisy acclaim, for they had recognized the face and figure of Lee, and spontaneously their hearts had taught them to act as loyal subjects do when the king passes by. That pure and lofty face was known to them all. Some had seen it in the glare of battle. Women and children knew it as a symbol of the highest for which they had suffered. It was such a scene as could only happen to people who had known great sorrow but had kept unsullied a standard of human virtue, and thus touchingly did homage to goodness worn so simply and yet so fair to behold in the noble presence of their great leader.

During the month of September, 1868, with his

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daughter, Susie, and several friends, he made an extensive trip through the West, going as far as Fort Hayes, where they were stopped in their further journey by the depredations and incursions of hostile Indians. The return journey to Richmond was made in time to permit Curry to begin his new duties as a Professor of Richmond College on Thursday, October 1. Into this work he entered with his accustomed energy, and the enthusiasm without which men do not accomplish the great things of life; and here for ten years he labored with the assiduity, the intelligence and the well-directed effort, which justified a later verdict from the public of noble and fruitful accomplishment. Of this experience he wrote at a subsequent day:—

> I have since acted as Associate Professor of Law, and am now filling the Chair of Philosophy. My association with the College has been very pleasant. I am much attached to the students, and they apparently to me. My rule is to treat them as gentlemen, and to have them regard me not as a hard taskmaster, but as a sympathizing friend.

In the meantime the "calls" and invitations that came up to him from many places and directions to pastorships which he persistently declined, attest his continued popularity and esteem among the people of his denomination; while his professional duties did not prevent a frequent indulgence by him in the exercise of his oratorical gifts in the pulpit and upon secular occasions. He records that during this year he preached sixty sermons, delivered seventy public addresses, and wrote a chapter of "Recollections" for Mr. Samuel Boykin's biography of Governor Howell Cobb.

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During December, 1868, the final act of a notable drama, growing out of the War between the States, was witnessed by Curry. In May, 1866, an indictment had been found against Mr. Davis, the President of the Confederate States, then a prisoner at Fortress Monroe, by the grand jury of the Circuit Court of the United States for the District of Virginia, and Charles O'Conor had written a letter to the distinguished prisoner, proffering his professional services in his defence, which offer had been accepted. At the May term, 1867, after repeated and unavailing efforts on the part of Mr. Davis' counsel, consisting of Messrs. Charles O'Conor, the acknowledged leader of the bar in the United States, William B. Reed of Philadelphia and John Randolph Tucker of Virginia, George Shea of New York, Robert Ould and James Lyons of Virginia, to obtain a trial or bail for the prisoner, the case was called for hearing on a writ of habeas corpus before Judge Underwood. Attorney General Evarts, and District Attorney Chandler appeared for the government; and Mr. Davis was released upon a bail bond of One Hundred Thousand Dollars, with Horace Greeley of New York the first surety thereon.

On the 26th of March, 1868, a new indictment had been found against the former President of the Confederacy, charging him in a number of counts, and in the involved phraseology of the law, with various acts of treason, notable among which was that of "conspiring with Robert E. Lee, J. P. Benjamin, John C. Breckinridge, William Mahone, H. A. Wise, John Letcher, William Smith, Jubal A. Early, James Longstreet, William H. Payne, D. H. Hill, A. P. Hill, P. G. T. Beauregard, W. H. C. Whiting, Ed. Sparrow,

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Samuel Cooper, Joseph E. Johnston, J. B. Gordon, C. F. Jackson, F. O. Moore, and with other persons whose names are to the grand jury unknown," "to make war against the United States," and with doing various other things, all of which things were alleged to have been done "traitorously, unlawfully, maliciously and wickedly."

On the finding of this indictment, the trial was continued from time to time until the fourth Monday in November, when it was arranged that Chief Justice Chase should be present. This date was later changed to December 3, 1868; and on that day the Chief Justice sat with Judge Underwood to hear a motion to quash the indictment. On this occasion, Messrs. O'Conor, Ould, Read and Lyons of Mr. Davis' counsel appeared; and the government was represented by the newly appointed district attorney, Mr. Beach, and by Mr. Richard H. Dana, Jr., of Boston, and Mr. H. H. Wells, the former military Governor of Virginia, when it was "District Number One." Mr. Ould opened for the defense on the motion to quash, and Messrs. Beach, Wells and Dana replied. Mr. O'Conor concluded the case for Mr. Davis on the 4th; and the Chief Justice and Judge Underwood disagreed, and the case was continued until May, 1869. On the 15th day of February, 1869, the following order was entered in the Federal Circuit Court at Richmond:—

MONDAY, February 15, 1869.

United States

vs. *Upon Indictment for Treason.*

Thomas P. Turner, William Smith, Wade Hampton, Benjamin Huger, Henry A. Wise, Samuel Cooper, G. W. C. Lee, W. H. F. Lee, Charles Mallory, William Mahone,

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O. F. Baxter, Robert E. Lee, James Longstreet, William E. Taylor, Fitzhugh Lee, George W. Alexander, Robert H. Booker, John DeBree, M. D. Corse, Eppa Hunton, Roger A. Pryor, D. B. Bridgford, Jubal A. Early, R. S. Ewell, William S. Winder, George Booker, Cornelius Bayles, William H. Payne, R. S. Andrews, C. J. Faulkner, and R. H. Dulaney, W. N. McVeigh, H. B. Taylor, James A. Seddon, W. B. Richards, Jr., J. C. Breckinridge and Jefferson Davis.

(Two cases.)

The District Attorney, by leave of the Court, saith that he will not prosecute further on behalf of the United States against the above named parties upon separate indictments for treason. It is, therefore, ordered by the Court that the prosecutions aforesaid be dismissed.

The motion to quash having failed in the disagreement of the Chief Justice and of Judge Underwood, the fact of the disagreement was certified to the Supreme Court of the United States, where the case was never called; and thus concluded the prosecution for treason, against Mr. Davis and his associates.

Curry makes record of the historic event and of the argument of this motion on the 4th of December, 1868:—

At the Circuit Court of the United States, Chase, Chief Justice, presiding, a motion to quash the indictment against Jefferson Davis was argued. I heard an able argument from Charles O'Conor, one of Mr. Davis' counsel. Hon. Wm. B. Reed of Philadelphia was associate counsel. I called to see him, and had a pleasant interview. He was a brother of Henry Reed, the author, and himself was a graceful and scholarly writer. Our acquaintance began by a letter he wrote to me, complimenting a speech in 1859 on the Speaker's election.

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This cold and almost colorless allusion to an event which deeply moved the hearts of the Southern people, written by one of the most ardent advocates of the right of Secession and of State sovereignty, the recognition or condemnation of which doctrines at the hands of the law lay in the determination of this case, serves to illustrate the cool temper of Curry's mind and how quickly he had begun to put into practice his precept to his son: "Let us live in the present and for the future, leaving the dead past to take care of itself." Though there is nowhere in his voluminous writings to be found any recantation of the settled and fixed convictions and principles of his political philosophy, when the arbitrament of the sword had once made final disposition of secession and of the Calhoun idea, he did not continue to dwell upon his ancient and unsurrendered faith; but turned his face steadily to those newer and more hopeful aspects, which the later dispensation promised. In this respect it may be noted here, that he followed the illustrious example, in act and precept, of his great commander, General Lee, whose *post-bellum* career was characterized by no repining or bitterness, and by such cheerful acceptance of conditions as his courage and faith might afford.

During the year 1869, Curry continued to keep busy with his collegiate duties, his lectures and his sermons, delivering among others two lectures in Washington College, at Lexington, Virginia, on "Language and Character," before cultured and appreciative audiences that included in their number the great president of the institution, General Robert E. Lee.

During this session the Trustees of Richmond

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College determined to abandon the governmental system of the college, which included a President, in favor of the more democratic scheme of making the professors of the various schools under the title of chairmen administrative heads of the college. In this change they pursued the plan of government that had been devised by Mr. Jefferson for the University of Virginia, where it had been followed with success since the foundation of that institution. Of the two great features of the higher education in collegiate and university administration and instruction, both of which Jefferson emphasized in his foundation of his University, that of the elective system of studies has since his time steadily grown and prevailed, in more or less modified form, until it has become a conspicuous and accustomed feature of university and college life in America; while the other, namely, of choosing a Chairman of the Faculty from the professors in rotation as the temporary head of the institution, has been tried in various southern institutions, as Curry records its trial in 1869 at Richmond College, only to be ultimately abandoned, as it was abandoned there, and has since been abandoned at the University of Virginia itself, as inadequate and insufficient under existing conditions. It is to be observed, however, that Curry makes no comment upon its effectiveness or lack of it, as it came under his observation at that time.

At this time the little brown books are full of notes of a more or less domestic and personal nature, which record the graduation of his daughter at the Richmond Female College in the schools of English, French and Moral Science; the inception of Mrs.

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Curry's work as a teacher of the infant class in the Sunday School of the First Baptist Church, of which she made a great success, raising this class in numbers from thirty, when she first took charge of it, to two hundred and twenty-five, when she gave it up ten years later, on account of ill-health; and of various other incidents and occurrences of temporary personal interest.

The invitations to pastorates still continued to be made and declined.

On his return from St. Louis, in obedience to such a call, he heard Beecher preach in the Brooklyn Tabernacle; and this year, too, the American Baptist Publication Society published his tract, "Protestantism: How far a Failure"—a discussion showing the development of his mind in the direction of technical theological investigation.

But perhaps the most notable event of the year 1869, in its bearing upon his later career, was his meeting with Mr. George Peabody. The Peabody Fund had, at that time, just been established; and Dr. Barnas Sears, an able and scholarly citizen of Massachusetts, had been made its Agent, and had come south, and taken up his residence at Staunton, in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia.

"In 1869," writes Curry of this episode, "at the White Sulphur Springs, I had the honor of being introduced by Dr. Sears to Mr. Peabody. This was the first and only time I ever saw him. The interview was pleasant, and I was agreeably impressed by his benevolent countenance, the dignity and ease with which he received visitors, and his earnest, patriotic desire that the impoverished South should be benefitted by his benefaction."

Curry has left in his "History of the Peabody

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Education Fund " a more extended account of both Mr. Peabody and Dr. Sears, the latter of whom he visited some years afterwards at his home in Staunton.

The year 1870 brought to him many occasions for wide and varied service in the causes of education and religion. He attended a National Baptist Convention in Brooklyn, in April of that year, which was held under the auspices of the Brooklyn Social Union,—in many respects a remarkable assemblage, which gave a great impulse to the educational movement of the time. Curry delivered an address before the Convention on the "Condition and Prospects of Education in the South," as affecting both races, with especial reference to the duties of Baptists in relation thereto.

In June, 1870, his almost abnormal activity took form in a Report to the Board of Foreign Missions of his Church, in which he recommended the establishment of a mission in Europe. "From this," he modestly writes in 1877, "came the present successful Italian Mission."

Recurring to his diaries, we note the genesis and beginning of the Richmond College Law School, in these simple entries:—

December 10, 1868.—Trustees of Richmond College determined to establish a Law School.

October 11, 1870.—Delivered my first lecture to Law Class on Constitutional Law.

And about 1877:—

In October, 1870, began the Law School of Richmond College, with Mr. William Green, Judge Halyburton and myself as Professors, I taking the chair of Constitutional and International Law.

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It was a remarkable faculty with which the young law school opened its doors. Curry, himself, was a man of unusual distinction, wide experience, and strong ability; Judge Halyburton had occupied conspicuous position in the public eye in ante-bellum years, and in the era of the Confederacy; and Mr. William Green was, by the testimony of his brethren of the bar, one of the most learned lawyers then living in America. But Halyburton and Green were both comparatively aged men, with "eyes grown old with gazing on the pilot-stars"; and neither continued long in their new chairs. So that the burden of the new law school fell upon Curry,—a burden which he bore with his characteristic energy and ability for several years.

On October 12, of this year (1870), General Robert E. Lee died at Lexington; and the next month an historic meeting of Confederate soldiers was held in Richmond to inaugurate a movement for building a monument to the great leader of the Southern armies. This meeting convened in the Second Presbyterian Church; and, amid much enthusiasm, speeches were made by ex-President Davis, Generals Gordon, Preston, and Henry A. Wise; and Colonels Marshall, Johnson, Withers, and others. The movement resulted in the noble equestrian monument of Lee that is now one of the chief ornaments of Monument Avenue in the former Confederate Capital.

At this time, Dr. Barnas Sears, the General Agent of the Peabody Fund, was present in Richmond; and on November 2 he was Curry's guest. The same day a meeting was held in the Capitol with the object of advancing the cause of the Common School System, provided by the new Constitution

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of the State, and already inaugurated by Virginians under the restored government of the Commonwealth. The deliberations of this conference were participated in by Governor Gilbert C. Walker, Dr. Sears, W. W. Walker of Westmoreland, and Curry, all of whom delivered addresses.

In December, 1870, the joint committee of the two houses of the Virginia Legislature, then in session, to which had been referred the question of the disposal of the Government Land Script, held public sessions in the Capitol; and various representatives of the colleges and higher educational institutions presented the claims of their respective institutions to the endowment. Curry in two able and earnest speeches before this Committee urged the claims of Richmond College; but, as the issue developed, without success.

In July, 1871, the Trustees of Richmond College combined the schools of English and Moral Science, and elected Curry to the chair. He accepted the appointment, resigning the professorship of Law in order to give his complete official time to this work, which was more congenial to his tastes than that of a law teacher. Again his diary is a dry record of the addresses that he delivered in 1871, and of the pastorates and professorships that he declined. He caps the climax of this distinguished, if uninteresting period, by the recital of his declination of three College presidencies within the twelve months, namely, of Georgetown College, Kentucky, of Mercer University, Georgia, and of the University of Alabama; and notes during the same year his refusal of a professorship in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Many more were to follow from all parts

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of the country, among them that of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, whose record of educational distinction might well have proved an allurement to his ambition.

The criterion for the choice of a professor in those days was not exact scholarship and published research, but personality, impressive human qualities and teaching ability. This shifting about from law to English and from philosophy to theology strikes our modern notions queerly, but poverty and the emphasis on teaching ability made it possible. Curry could teach anything attractively, and his energy kept his attainments always in advance of his pupils.

The year 1872 was, in his own words, "active and memorable"; but more from his personal point of view, than from that of the general reader; for its record embraces solely the details of energetic work done by him in behalf of his church and of the educational institution with which he was officially connected. Such civic, religious and educational honors continued to be showered upon him as are usually conferred upon few men; and if his notation of them is exact almost to monotonousness, it is none the less free from any expression which indicates that they brought with them elation or undue self-appreciation.

It was at a great meeting of the association of his church that a Memorial Campaign was organized that aroused much of his enthusiasm, and to whose work he contributed no little of his energies and efforts. It was determined to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the body; "and," he states, "appropriately to testify our gratitude, it was resolved

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unanimously by the Association to raise Three Hundred Thousand Dollars for the endowment of Richmond College. Resolutions were adopted looking to a grand meeting at Richmond the ensuing year. A Memorial Committee, of which I was a member, was appointed to carry out the project of the Memorial Fund; and Dr. J. L. Burrows was chosen as the Financial Secretary."

"Thus began," he continues, "our grand Memorial Campaign, when the Baptist Churches were visited, addressed and thoroughly aroused. Great excitement was produced. Many Baptist preachers and laymen became voluntary agents to help on the good work. We combined with the Semi-Centennial celebration a remembrance of what the Baptists of Virginia had done for the great work of Religious Liberty in the United States. This involved necessarily a recital of the legislation of the Colony and a discussion of the principle of an Establishment. Collaterally, Presbyterians and Methodists were brought into the discussion; but the Episcopalians were especially sore at the production of their unenviable record. Carefully I abstained from all attacks upon, or criticism of the Church, and confined myself to a discussion of the Establishment."

In 1873 the Baptist Memorial Campaign was actively and energetically conducted; and to it he gave effective and enthusiastic assistance. During the latter days of May and the earlier days of June of that year the Semi-centennial meeting, which the raising of the Memorial Fund was designed to commemorate, was held in Richmond. Delegates were present from many States of the Union in the North, the South and the West. Curry writes of it that it was the largest religious convention that ever assem-

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bled in Virginia; and certainly it was conspicuous among religious gatherings of a similar character for the enthusiasm of its participants. The Association met in the Second Baptist Church, and he was re-elected its President. The building itself was inadequate to hold the great numbers in attendance; and the largest audiences were accommodated under a huge tent which was erected upon the Richmond College grounds. A number of the Church's most distinguished leaders and divines were present, among whom were Dr. J. A. Broadus, conspicuous as a great pulpit orator of his generation, and for his unusual gift of eloquence; Dr. J. B. Jeter, a former President of the College, and noted as an able preacher and strong controversialist, and who was widely known as the editor of the *Religious Herald*, and as the author of a number of published works; Dr. Sears, the General Agent of the Peabody Fund, and one of the most eminent scholars; and Dr. S. S. Cutting, the first Secretary of the American Baptist Educational Commission, and himself a writer and theologian of national distinction. On the second day of the session Curry delivered to a large and deeply interested audience an address on the subject of "The Struggles and Triumphs of Virginia Baptists," a notable historical contribution to the story of the struggle for Religious Freedom in Virginia, which was published by the American Baptist Publication Society, and reached a wide circulation.

The Montgomery White Sulphur Springs at this period vied with the old Greenbrier White in the distinction and eminence of its guests and habitués; and in the late summer of 1873 Curry attended a meeting there of the members of the Southern His-

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torical Society, which was presided over by "Honest John" Letcher, the War Governor of the Commonwealth, and addressed by General Jubal A. Early. The object of the Society, which has down to the present time continued to maintain a successful and highly important existence, was "to collect and preserve materials for an authentic history" of the South; and among others who were present at this meeting, and interested with Curry and their other associates in the work of the Society, were Generals Beauregard, Wilcox, Fitzhugh Lee, Dabney H. Maury and Humes, and Commander Raphael Semmes, of the Confederate ship, the "Alabama." Curry records a later meeting of the Society in October of the same year, that was held in Richmond, the participants in which were scarcely less famous. Among them he mentions General Early, who presided clad in a suit of Confederate gray, such as he wore to the day of his death; Dr. Hoge, the eminent and eloquent Presbyterian divine, whose oration at the unveiling of the statue of "Stonewall" Jackson, presented by English gentlemen to the State of Virginia, suggested, in its lofty dignity, the eloquence of Bossuet; General Wade Hampton, later Governor of South Carolina, and Senator from that State, and Major Robert Stiles, whose subsequently published "Four Years with Marse Robert" ranks with the best stories of the great tragedy of the War between the States. It is pleasant and inspiriting to behold these men, unbroken in spirit, taking counsel together how they might preserve and increase the spiritual and intellectual integrity of a society whose outlook then seemed almost hopeless.

Nothing, however, appears to have served in any

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degree to deflect him from the two things with which his mind and heart during this period were overflowing. His first and foremost thought and effort alike were in behalf of the causes of religion and of education; and he continued, whenever his professional duties permitted, the self-imposed work of speaking and preaching in many places. Of all of these speeches and sermons he makes systematic record; and among the memoranda of this year occurs the following quaint entry of an experience in Southwest Virginia:—

Made a Sunday School talk and preached at a Lutheran Church in the country. Collection taken up for Professor of Theology at Roanoke College, sixty cents. Hard crowd.

Sometime in October of this year he attended the World's Evangelical Alliance in New York City, where he met with severe criticism on account of the frankness of his arguments against the alliance of Church and State in England. He attacked the establishment of the Church in that country with an earnestness and vigor that were more characteristic than discreet, in view of the presence in which he spoke; and he was called to order amid demonstrations of considerable feeling and excitement. He has left the following account of this episode among his notes:—

Delegates from Europe, Asia and America were present. I delivered an address, prepared by request of Dr. Schaff and others on the "Relations of Church and State." An officious extension of time by one Dr. Crookes, a Methodist minister, produced an intense excitement. The Assembly *en masse* cheered and hur-

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rahed and demanded that I should proceed; but I declined and retired, being followed by three-fourths of the audience. Besides its appearance in the proceedings of the Alliance, my address was widely published in Europe and America, and the Liberation Society of England issued it as a tract to help them in their work.

Curry's account of the incident does not seem, however, to be exact in the light of the reports of the current newspaper-press of the time. These show that he was called "to order" rather than "to time"; and that Dr. Crookes, who was presiding, interrupted him, not so much because his half-hour was up as because his speech was regarded as unpleasant by some of the English churchmen who were present.

Curry's status as a citizen of Virginia had by this time become so firmly established, and the impression which his ability and devotion had made upon the people of the State was so strong that in January, 1874, members of the Legislature then in session at Richmond approached him with the suggestion that he should become a candidate for the office of State Superintendent of Public Instruction. At this time Dr. William H. Ruffner, who had drafted the bill establishing the public school system under the new Constitution of Virginia, and had been elected the first Superintendent, was discharging with great zeal and ability the duties of the office; and either in recognition of Ruffner's services in this position, or because he did not care to adventure the contest, or for some other reason that is not disclosed, Curry declined the invitation. At the same session of the Legislature, when that body was anxiously looking around for a fit and proper person to represent Virginia in the Federal Senate,—a search which finally

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resulted in the selection of Col. Robert E. Withers,—Curry's name, with those of a number of other native or adopted Virginians, was suggested for the position. That his just self-esteem was touched by the suggestion is evidenced by the note that he makes of it; but it is very questionable if he was ever seriously considered by any large number of the members.

"Visited the Legislature," he writes under date of January 10, 1874, in his diary, "in session for half an hour. Several members propose to use my name for United States Senate, as caucus of Conservative members have not been able to agree on a candidate."

In January, 1875, he began preaching at the First Baptist Church, according to an agreement which he had made in the preceding November to supply the pulpit for two months following the resignation of Dr. J. L. Burrows. This pastorate of two months was prolonged to six; and in the meantime he declined a call for a year. His work in this temporary pastorship was broadened by degrees in various directions, the most distinctive of which was a course of lectures to the church on the principles of the Baptists, which were dealt with, as he states, "not controversially, but for information."

Curry had now reached the meridian of life—fifty years of age. He had come up to Virginia from the lower South at forty-three, in obedience to an impulse always dominant in him, seeking an opportunity to array himself with the forces of progress and growth. Wealth and dignity of living had fallen to his lot, emancipating him from sordid anx-

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ieties. Love and admiration and sympathy, conditions absolutely necessary to the manifestation of his highest powers, stimulated and pricked him on to effort and helpfulness. His health was robust and his ambitions keen. He had a genius for popularity, a nature for public service. The abiding value of the idea of community effort, of collectivism in a democracy, came to him instinctively, as they did to Jefferson, despite the individualistic theories of government held by both. He was such a figure of humanitarian enthusiasm as New England had produced too luxuriantly, almost rankly, but which the South, since Jefferson's time, had produced rarely. He beheld society as an organism trying to grow under law. His passion was to aid in finding the law and in welcoming and leading the growth. He beheld Southern society, with unconquerable courage, seeking new standards and new ways of life, new economic conditions, amid a devastation unequalled in modern times. Proud, sensitive democracies must be pleaded with and shown how to do things needful to their growth, with infinite tact and patience. This was Curry's function. He was a pleader and a teacher and an ambassador to a proud, capable, stricken, but indomitable democracy. The bare record as set forth in this chapter seems scrappy and fragmentary. We see an intensely busy man teaching youth anything, from law to literature, preaching everywhere from the Pacific to the Atlantic, foremost in all great educational or religious organizations, writing for the press, rushing hither and thither and very happy and jubilant, not only over the tasks at hand but over the calls that everywhere came to him to come and help everybody.

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Looked at closely, however, these virile seven years of Curry's in the Old Dominion are not desultory years. They form a complete unit and constitute a perfect preparation for the supreme work which society needed to exact of him. The significance of moral character, the training of all the people, the spread of social sympathy—this trinity of public virtues was the creed this tireless public preacher was crying out to the South and to the Nation from the vantage ground of the great Commonwealth which had given the Nation birth, and had so suffered for duty's sake as to evoke the tenderness and regard of generous minds in all lands.

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CHAPTER XIV

POLITICS AND PRINCIPLES

THE Presidential election, the result of which was finally determined by the extra-constitutional Electoral Commission, took place in 1876; and Curry, in common with the mass of the American people, experienced a deep interest in its conduct and results. His journal of the period makes usually but scant record of contemporaneous politics. The eager politician of the 'fifties, absorbed in religious and educational work, seemed to have forgotten the existence of the machinery of government, but this startling event, whose issue threatened at one time grave and portentous results, is frequently mentioned by him. He notes his exercise of the franchise on election day, as follows:—

Tuesday, Nov. 7, 1876.—Voted before breakfast for Tilden and Hendricks, and for amendments to the (State) Constitution.

The following day shows this entry:—

Wednesday, 8.—News from the election of yesterday assures the success of Tilden & Hendricks. Result rather unexpected. People gathered in the streets in front of the *Dispatch* office, reading and hearing telegrams from various States and shouting vociferously. We feel as if the days of Federal tyranny were numbered. Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

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His patriotic exultation was short-lived. On Thursday, the 9th, he writes:—

Negroes very noisy and jubilant over Hayes' election, which is not a "fixed fact."

Other memoranda bearing upon the controverted result appear from time to time.

Nov. 20.—Still much uneasiness about the Presidential election. Universal distrust of President Grant and his party. Fraud or usurpation not considered beyond their purpose or capability. I am tired of this turmoil and distrust. I want a country I can love.

Dec. 2.—The country is much excited about the Presidential election. In South Carolina. Florida and Louisiana serious charges of fraud and intimidation on both sides. Gen. Grant has sent troops to each of the States. The votes of those States, if counted for Hayes, elect him. One electoral vote will elect Tilden. Business seriously affected by the possibility of an outbreak.

Dec. 6, 1876.—The Legislature of Virginia and the Electoral College meet in Richmond to-day. Heard that Louisiana, Florida, and South Carolina, the doubtful States, had been so manipulated as to secure their votes for Hayes and Wheeler.

The early part of 1877 found the issue still undetermined; and in order to reach a settlement the contending parties agreed upon the creation and organizing of the famous Electoral Commission, which, after listening to the arguments of counsel and gravely considering many momentous questions of law and fact, decided the contest at last according to the law of human nature. The Republicans upon the Commission were in a numerical majority of one; and the Electoral Commission, by a majority of one,

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declared the Republican nominees elected. Curry, keeping tally in his journal of the situation, writes, under date of February 10, 1877: "News this morning rather gloomy. Seems as if the Commission by a party vote will decide in favor of Hayes for President."

Later in the month he and his son, Manly, went to Washington; and the diary, under the date of February 24, contains the following:—

After going to the President's house, we went to the Capitol and spent most of the day in the House of Representatives, to the floor of which both of us were admitted.

We witnessed the assembling of the two Houses twice to count the electoral votes. Oregon, having passed the Commission, was after debate passed on. Pennsylvania was objected to.

Much dissatisfaction with the Commission. Democrats complain of having been deceived. Some bitterness on the part of Northwestern Democrats towards Eastern. Southern Democrats opposed to mere dilatory and factious opposition.

Not impressed by the ability of the House. Very few of the members with whom I served.

He again visited Washington on March 2.

Reached Washington at 1:30 and stopped at Willard's Hotel. Went in the afternoon and at night to the Capitol. The Congress having this morning, at 5 A. M., after a night's session, elected Hayes President, the business was of a routine character. I met in the Senate and House a number of old associates. The House did not impress me favorably. Many of the members of very ordinary ability. At night I remained until 10 o'clock. . . . The feeling of Democrats quite bitter, regarding themselves as having been cheated out of the Presidency.

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Curry's natural interest in the momentous question before Congress and the Commission would of itself have afforded sufficient reason for his visits to Washington at this time; but there was also a question of a more personal character that was doubtless an impelling motive for his presence in the national capital. His pardon for bearing arms against the Government in the War between the States had been granted in October, 1865, by President Johnson; but during the twelve years following he still rested under political disabilities. In 1872 a general amnesty bill had been passed by the Congress removing the political disabilities imposed by the new amendments to the Constitution; but from its provisions were excepted about seven hundred and fifty persons, who had held the highest positions under the United States government. He wanted, as he had written, "a government that he could love"; his ardent temperament and instinctive patriotism demanded the exercise of loyalty, and it was not unnatural, though painful, for him to entertain some lack of complete affection for the government under which he was still inhibited from the right to hold office. The bill to remove his disabilities was passed by the Senate on February 27, 1877; and on March 2 the formalities were completed by which he was restored to full citizenship. Upon the following day he received an extraordinary tribute to his high character, his reputation for great ability, and his conceded patriotism.

"I called at the Capitol," he wrote, many years later, " and had a pleasant interview with Senator Sherman, who had, unsought, interposed in favor of the removal of my political disabilities, and for whose integrity, patriotism, and ability I had great respect and admiration. When

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leaving, he asked me if I were not going to see the President. I replied that as a matter of respect and friendship I should be glad of the privilege, but I had no business with him, and besides must leave the city in a few hours. To this he answered, 'You ought to go. He likes you very much. I have often heard him speak well of you.' 'If I were to try to see him, I could not, as hundreds of people must be pressing for interviews.' 'I will arrange that. He is at my house. Take this card.' Writing something on the card, which contained his name and street address, he handed it to me, and I left. Arriving at the house, I sent in my card and Mr. Sherman's, and was requested to wait a few minutes until a deputation from Ohio retired. In a few minutes I had a cordial welcome. After the usual inquiries, he expressed earnestly his desire and purpose so to conduct his administration as to bring the estranged sections into harmony and fraternity. Then to my surprise and gratification he declared his willingness to put into his cabinet some Southern men, or a Southern man, who had voted for Mr. Tilden, provided the person would give his administration an impartial support. A place in the Cabinet was tendered to me, but declined with proper and sincere expressions of thankfulness for the confidence reposed. He then said he was willing to appoint Gen. Joseph E. Johnston, and wished my opinion as to his acceptance on the conditions mentioned. As to his acceptance I had no knowledge, but the acceptance would imply necessarily loyalty to his Chief. Having so confided in me, I ventured to say that the appointment would defeat the patriotic purpose of pacification he so warmly expressed. Gen. Johnston was so identified with the Confederacy, his promotion to a high place would awaken bitterest opposition in the North, and its strength would be such as greatly to cripple, if not defeat, his policy. After asking me about Gov. Hubbard of Texas and Judge Key of Tennessee, afterwards made Postmaster General, he expressed a desire to make the Federal appointments in

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the South acceptable to that section. I felt it my duty to express strongly my conviction: 'The South will not object to have the offices filled by Northern men, if they are honest and true, and go South, not to fleece the people, but to identify themselves with the country and its interests.' 'It would be better,' he responded, 'not to float the office-holders, but to select them from the residents.' 'No, no,' I interposed, 'you cannot find in the South a sufficient number of capable and honest white Republicans to fill the offices at your disposal.' This was naturally received with some incredulity; but I reasserted what I felt to be demonstrable truth, and I knew that putting 'scalawags,' as they were called, in responsible places meant the defeat of his noble purpose, and the serious injury of the South.

"This conversation occurred a quarter of a century ago, and thanks to President Hayes and the better understanding between the sections, and the wiser action of the governments, my strong expressions would now require large modifications."

Curry's diary for this year contains a number of interesting, if desultory, entries. Among them are the following:—

March 7.—Took supper with Dr. Coleman. Moses Ezekiel, the sculptor, was the guest,—a native of Richmond, a Jew. He made for the Jews a statue of Religious Liberty, which was unveiled during the Centennial. In Mr. Ezekiel's studio in Rome we saw the huge block on the first or second day after the workmen began upon it.

Since its author penned the foregoing paragraph, the guest of Dr. Coleman's whom he was invited to meet has achieved a larger fame that extends over two continents, and is illustrated in America not only by his statue of Religious Liberty, but by many

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other noble works of art, that have sprung from his chisel in his workshop at the Eternal City in the old Baths of Diocletian. Ezekiel, now a chevalier by the grace of the King of Italy, was a cadet at the Virginia Military Institute in the later years of the War between the States, and took part with the cadet battalion in their heroic charge at New Market in 1861,—an episode that he has commemorated in his bronze statue of "Virginia lamenting her Dead," on the grounds of the Institute at Lexington. His Jefferson, donated by the sculptor himself, adorns the north front of the Rotunda plaza at the University of Virginia.

Under the same date the diarist writes:—

> The Secretary of the Baptist Publication Society notifies me to-day that for a tract of mine on The Distinctive Principles of the Baptists, the premium of Fifty Dollars offered for the best on that subject was awarded.

He was at his father's old home in Talladega County a few days later; and wrote of it in his journal:—

> March 13.—Stopped at my father's place, where I spent my boyhood years. Much dilapidated. Looked at the graves in the garden. A bad custom to bury the dead on farms in the country, as they change owners so frequently. When my father removed to this place in May, 1838, it was very beautiful. The soil was fertile, the watercourses clear, game was abundant, and there were some unremoved Indians.

Of the town of Talladega, under the same date, he wrote:—

> Returned to town. Spent some time in the Court House, where I practised law and made many political

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speeches. People are poor and depressed. Radical misrule has been impoverishing.

March 31.—Letter from Dr. Hoge, in behalf of the Board of Directors, offering me the Presidency of the Virginia Bible Society. Declined.

April 28.—Reached Washington at 2 A. M. St. James Hotel. Called on Mr. A. H. Stephens; found him abed and cheerful. Spoke highly of Mr. Hayes.

At Willard's Hotel had a long talk with Senators Gordon and Lamar, Gov. Colquitt of Georgia, and W. H. Trescott of South Carolina, on the political outlook.

Called on Mr. Sherman, Secretary of the Treasury.

Mr. Lamar and I called on the President and had a pleasant interview. The President seems determined to unite North and South as one people. He is very sensible, good mannered and patriotic.

During the summer he visited Dr. Sears, in Staunton, on his return from the Warm Springs:—

July 31, 1877.—At 12:30 P. M. stage for Millboro. View from mountain magnificent. Supper at Millboro. Car for Staunton. Arrived at midnight. Found Dr. Sears' son waiting to conduct me to his father's house on the hill overlooking the town. Place much improved. The oaks encouraged; other trees and flowers along the gravelled walks. Quite a variety of fruit trees. House well arranged, economizing space, and neatly furnished.

August 1.—Coming from chamber to parlor Dr. Sears gave me a cordial greeting. Until 12 in the house and under the trees, we talked of Education at the South and the Peabody work. Dr. Sears said he was in Boston to lecture before the Social Science Association. Geo. B. Emerson invited him to a club of Bostonians. Mr. R. C. Winthrop, who was present, invited him to present in writing his views as to the proper expenditure of the Peabody Grant, as the Trustees were to hold their first meeting in a few days in New York. This he did in a letter of eight

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pages. When the Trustees met, his suggestions were adopted, and he was elected Secretary to carry them out. Thus arose his connection with the Peabody Fund.

While Horace Mann was Secretary of the Board of Education in Massachusetts, and during Dr. Sears' first two years in that office, their salary of $1,500 each was paid by a Mr. Dwight.

In the autumn of the year Richmond was visited by a distinguished party of guests, to whom was given a cordial and hospitable reception, in which Curry bore a prominent part. His account of this event appears in his diary.

October 30.—Accompanied a deputation of the City Council and a committee of the Agricultural Society, on special invitation to meet the President of the United States. At Quantico met him, his wife and his two sons, Secretary Sherman and wife, Secretary Evarts, Secretary Thompson, Attorney General Devens, General J. T. Morgan and others. *En route* great curiosity to see Mr. Hayes. At Fredericksburg, a reception. As we came within the limits of the City of Richmond great crowds, all the military, fire companies, etc., turned out to welcome the visitors. At a stand, near Monroe Park, the President and Cabinet spoke to many thousands. I was called for. The President introduced me as his old college mate; and I asked for three cheers, which were given and repeated. *En route* to the hotel the streets were lined with enthusiastic people and flags. The President received at the Exchange Hotel at night. General Morgan our guest.

October 31.—Called at 10 on the Presidential party. Soon started to the Fair. Governor Kemper on the grounds, welcomed the President to the State. All the members of the Cabinet, and General Morgan and Dr. Loring, member of Congress from Massachusetts, spoke. Mrs. Hayes was introduced to the multitude, who cheered vociferously.

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The Governor gave the President and party a reception and then a collation.

November 1.—At 10 A. M., the President and Mrs. Hayes, Mr. Sherman, Secretary of the Treasury, and Mrs. Sherman, Mr. Evarts, Secretary of State, R. W. Thompson, Secretary of the Navy, Mr. Devens, Attorney General, Governor Kemper, Generals Joseph E. Johnston, W. H. F. Lee and Wickham, Judge Meredith, Hon. J. T. Morgan, Senator from Alabama, Mr. James Thomas and Miss Kate C. Thomas breakfasted with us. Room handsomely decorated with flowers.

Went to Fair Grounds. President and members of Cabinet spoke. The President reviewed the First Virginia Regiment, and some other companies.

Dined at Col. Hobson's with Generals Morgan, Maury and S. G. Jones and Colonel Archer Anderson.

In the latter part of December, 1877, Curry spent several days in New York City, where he met President Hayes again. He preached at Hanson Place, Brooklyn, and attended various gatherings of more or less importance. Under date of December 21, his first day in the metropolis, he makes the following entry in his journal:—

In the afternoon, at the Union Theological Seminary, I heard an informal lecture of Rev. Joseph Cook before the students and others on the Advantage of Philosophical Studies in a course of Theological training. Present, Doctors Adams, Hitchcock, Shedd, Schaff, Hall, Taylor, Ralph Wells, and others.

At night heard him again in the hall of the Young Men's Christian Association on Ultimate America. The poet, William Cullen Bryant, presided.

During 1877 Curry's previous experience of receiving calls to many pulpits in various directions,

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and elections to professorships and presidencies of educational institutions, was repeated. He was offered the Presidency of the East Tennessee University, and, provisionally, that of Richmond College; and he declined calls from churches in St. Louis and Baltimore; and he received invitations to make addresses and deliver lectures almost without number. On February 23, 1877, he makes the following entry in his journal, illustrative of the many demands upon his time and energies:—

Invitations to lecture in Norfolk, Portsmouth and Petersburg.

People seem to think that I am a public servant, with nothing to do but respond to their calls.

With all his enthusiasms and aroused interests, which responded whenever possible to such demands, their number outweighed his strength and time; and it is scarcely a matter of wonder that occasionally his patience became strained. Many other solicitations to render all sorts of services, and do all kinds of things, were added to the burden of these invitations. On November 15th he writes in his diary an amusing list of what a day may bring forth in the life of such a man:—

As illustration of requests made of me to-day, I have been asked,

1. For photograph.
2. To read preliminary chapters of a novel, write notice, get a publisher.
3. Obtain employment as associate or corresponding editor.
4. Find grave of a dead soldier, and cost of removal to Alabama.
5. Give opinion on feet-washing, as a religious rite.

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6. Give opinion on rightfulness of firing tobacco on Sunday.

7. On suits by administrator against a brother-member of a church.

8. Secure appointment as superintendent of schools in a county.

9. Tell what is meant in 24 Matt. 30 by "Sign of the Son of Man in heaven."

10. Tell whether meteoric shower in 1833 had been predicted by scientists.

This in addition to regular college duties and faculty meetings.

In 1878 the question of the payment of the public debt of the Commonwealth, which had been contracted prior to the War between the States, and before the separation of the State of West Virginia, largely for the purpose of public improvements in what is now both States, came to the front as a matter for political disposition. A movement was inaugurated, under the leadership of General William Mahone, for a readjustment of the debt on a basis which should compel the contribution by West Virginia of its proportionate part. A wide difference of opinion sprung up in the older State as to its obligation and ability to pay the whole debt, and resulted in the disorganization of the dominant democratic party, and the birth of a new party known as "Readjuster." For several years the question was the subject of bitter political contest on the hustings and at the ballot-box, with the State and Federal Courts taking turns at attempting its legal decision. The Mahone party for a time were successful; and the democracy was dislodged from power. Colonel William E. Cameron, the Readjuster candidate for Governor, was elected to that office over Major John W.

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Daniel; and Mahone and Riddleberger were chosen by the Readjuster legislature, the United States Senators.

Curry stood with the Debt-payers. He believed that as Virginia had contracted the debt, and had got value for the bonds, which had been expended for beneficent public uses, both a legal and a moral obligation existed for their payment in full, in spite of the State's great poverty and of the further fact that the debt was owned almost altogether abroad. He therefore favored, as against the "forcible readjustment" advocated by Mahone's followers, such a settlement with the creditors as should be satisfactory to them and should preserve the Commonwealth's ancient and untarnished financial honor. In January, 1878, he received a request in writing, signed by many of the most eminent "debt-paying" democrats of Richmond, including Gen. Joseph E. Johnston, Bishop Doggett, Drs. Jeter and Hoge, and Judge Meredith, to address the people on the momentous subject of the State debt. In response to the invitation, a week after its reception he spoke, with a discernment that penetrated at once the core of the issue, and with his characteristic political courage, upon the subject of "Laws and Morals" as bearing upon the question at stake. His address was delivered in Mozart Hall, a meeting-place in Richmond whose name became famous during the great political struggle by reason of its association with various gatherings of the two discordant and excited parties. A large audience greeted with tremendous applause his speech of an hour and a quarter, in which he advocated his side of the question with unusual power. He records with pardonable pride the fact that no

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address which he ever delivered received more approbation and commendation than did this one; and his spirit so warmed to the contest, that it was not long before he was in the thick of it, debating the subject with speakers on the other side, or delivering addresses in very many sections of the State. Success, pronounced though temporary, perched upon the banners of his adversaries; and it was only after a long period of political acrimony and bad feeling, and a bitter struggle through all the courts, that the matter was brought to a final conclusion as a political issue.

But politics, as has been said, in spite of his long experience in the political forum, had now come to be of secondary consideration with him. Without any recantation of his old beliefs, but with a steady adherence to those which the issue of war left to him intact and permissible,—and all the while with a patriotic acceptance of later conditions,—he had long since set his face to a hopeful sunrise, and was filled with a spirit of determination to do his best for the people among whom he dwelt. Under date of November 28, 1878, he writes in his diary:—

I attended Thanksgiving meeting at the Second Church, and spoke. The South has never observed these days, from a prejudice against their supposed New England origin. I mentioned as cause for thanks:

1. Good crops.
2. Arrest of yellow-fever scourge and the Northern aid.
3. Abolition of slavery.
4. Divorcement of government from religion.
5. Constitutional Republic.
6. Peace, and freedom from entangling alliances; and spoke of the future with an honest, intelligent and Christian people.

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Still holding, as so many of his Southern compatriots had held, to the constitutional interpretation of government,—the righteousness of State rights, and the unrighteousness of centralization in the Federal organization,—the one-time ardent secessionist recognized secession as a thing of the past, the earlier advocate of slavery rejoiced that it had passed away, and the prophet of the future conceived that the wise preoccupation of the South should be in education and industry rather than in politics.

Some days later he writes:—

> Met Drs. Cutting and Lathrop in conference in reference to holding Institutes for training and instruction of colored Ministers. Very cordial acquiescence.

No record appears among his journals and papers of the incidents and happenings of the year 1879; but in that year he was still busy with his teaching and preaching, while he wrought into the fabric of his political campaigning the morality of maintaining public obligations.

In 1880 the journals reappear; and an entry in March of that year contains the notation of an offer from President Hayes of an appointment on the Board of Visitors of the United States Military Academy at West Point; but the offer appears to have been declined, as was a similar one to the Board of the Naval Academy at Annapolis, emanating from the same source.

After another visit abroad, he returned to Virginia; and in the Presidential election of that autumn voted for General Winfield Scott Hancock, the democratic candidate for President.

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CHAPTER XV

PEABODY AND HIS TRUST

In 1866 George Peabody, a wealthy merchant of England, who was by birth a native of Massachusetts, of old New England stock, had visited the United States, and had made a gift of $2,100,000, which he increased to $3,500,000 in 1869, for the promotion of education in the South. The first General Agent chosen by the corporation of the Peabody Fund to administer its trust, as has been stated in previous pages, was Dr. Barnas Sears. Dr. Sears died in July, 1880; and in February, 1881, Curry was elected his successor in the General Agency.

"Thursday, February 3.—Telegram from Hon. R. C. Winthrop," he writes in his journal, "and letter of President Hayes, announcing my unanimous election as Agent of the Peabody Fund."

Mr. Winthrop and Curry had already been in correspondence with each other on this subject; and under date of November 3, 1880, a letter had come from the former at Brookline, Massachusetts, to the latter at Richmond:—

My dear Sir:—Your favor of Sept. 30th reached me just as I was leaving home to attend our Triennial Church Convention at New York. I only returned home at the

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end of last week; and I am unwilling to leave it longer unacknowledged.

I thank you for your kind personal expressions, and for your offer of a welcome to Richmond. I shall hardly leave home again until I go to the meeting of the Trustees at Washington on the 1st Wednesday of February. It would have been particularly pleasant, and perhaps I may say, profitable, for me to meet you before that meeting,—if we had come together casually. But any concerted interview might cause misunderstandings by others, if not by yourself. My own views are unchanged since I wrote you, and are not in the way of being changed. But I must keep myself open to conviction, until I have had a full and free consultation with my associate Trustees. Meantime I hope and trust that nothing of sectional feeling will get into our Board. We have escaped it so far. But yesterday's results prove that the air is saturated with prejudice,—on both sides, I fear. I have purposely avoided all active participation in political strife since Mr. Peabody charged me with presiding over this Southern Trust. I inclose the only expression of opinion which I ventured on during the campaign; and that was forced from me by an unauthorized use of my name. But it was prophetic of the result. Solid Souths and Solids Norths have been plainly arrayed against each other, and the issue has been very much what I anticipated. A good Providence presides over Nations as well as over individuals; and I will not question that all will be for the best in the end. But I yearn for an era of good feeling, and wish that all the old parties could be merged into a grand union of patriots.

Mr. Evarts has just sent for my files the letter of Dr. Cutting, which you sent him. I shall take it, with all the other testimonials, to Washington.

Believe me, Dear Sir,
Very truly, yours,
ROBT. C. WINTHROP.

Hon. J. L. M. CURRY.

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Mr. Winthrop, in his telegram announcing the new appointment, had requested Curry's presence in Washington, where the Board was in session; and accordingly on the day following that of its receipt, he went to the Capitol.

Friday 4.—To Riggs Hotel. At 11 met Peabody Board of Trustees, who received me cordially.
To the Senate and House of Representatives.
Dined with the Peabody Trustees at Secretary Evarts'.

Other details of his appointment are recorded in an additional entry:—

In acknowledgment of the high honor sought by many worthy applicants, I expressed my sincere thanks, and my determination to give my best power to carrying out the past policy, with which I was familiar. Gen. Henry R. Jackson, a Trustee from Georgia, informed me that Gen. Grant made the motion for my election, jocularly remarking that the nomination was fit to be made, notwithstanding the gentleman was not from Ohio.

Curry's acceptance of the position of General Agent of the Peabody Fund necessitated the surrender of his duties as Professor in Richmond College. He accordingly resigned at once; and at the close of the session in June was made a Trustee of the College, and this office he continued to hold for fifteen or twenty years, during a large part of which time he was President of the Board.

To the discharge of his duties as Agent of the Peabody Fund Curry brought the varied experience of a busy and already distinguished career, the enthusiasm which remained a peculiar characteristic of his mind throughout his life, and the ambition to put aside the losses of the past in the

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endeavor of achievement for the future. There were very many eminent scholars and educators who either made direct application to succeed Dr. Sears in the position, or whose names were presented by their friends and admirers; but both Mr. Winthrop, the President of the great Trust, and Dr. Sears, its accomplished General Agent, had long before the latter's death fixed upon Curry as Sears' successor. In their disinterested judgment his character and capacity and catholic spirit conspicuously marked him as the man for the place; and in their view the members of the Board concurred with a unanimity that was without hesitation.

His association with both Mr. Winthrop and Dr. Sears had already informed them of his fitness, and had prepared him to take up and develop the work on the lines of its successful foundation and former conduct. His qualifications were all accentuated by the facts of his Southern birth, association, and training; and were calculated to appeal to the confidence and to arouse the favorable expectations of both North and South.

Dr. Sears, with his eye long upon him as the man of all men to take up the dropped thread of his own ended work, had written to him in February, 1880:—

> We shall be more and more interested in the legislation of the several States. We come directly in contact with legislative bodies in arranging for normal schools. I would not be surprised if when you come to the front (as I confidently expect you will), you shall find yourself specially in this congenial atmosphere. I am sure a great work is before you. I do not regret being a pioneer. I only hope the pioneer work will be well done. I want no higher honor. I could have had no higher joy.

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It would have taken doubtless a less discerning mind than Curry's to interpret the suggestions of such communications as this; and he responded to them with a study of the Trustees' aims and plans. As early as 1873, he had attracted the attention of Dr. Sears, who wrote to Mr. Winthrop in that year that he knew a man "at that moment who was abundantly qualified and admirably adapted" for the duties of the General Agency, "if anything should happen" to him; and in a later letter in the same year he mentions Curry's name as that of the man of whom he had written. In a letter of September 7, 1877, he says:—

> Speaking of our successors, I would say, I have recently had Dr. Curry with me, and went over with him all my plans and doings. I am more and more satisfied that he is our man; he is so many-sided, so clear in his views, so judicious, and knows so well how to deal with all classes of men. His whole being is wrapped up in general education, and he is the best lecturer or speaker on the subject in all the South. He is in perfect accord with us on all points. If I can be the means of securing him for future General Agent, I think it will be the best thing I ever did for the Trustees.

And in April, 1879, he writes again to Mr. Winthrop:—

> I am trying to put things in good order for my successor. I keep Dr. C. informed of all I do. He understands well that I have no authority, though he knows my opinion of his fitness for the office.

Winthrop shared heartily in Sears' views of Curry; and when the time arrived for the election, it was only natural that he should have been chosen by

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the Board with the unanimity which his support by such authority demanded.

At the time of Curry's election, the Peabody benefaction had been in existence for fourteen years. The instrument creating it bears date of February 7, 1867; and by its provisions sixteen men of national reputation, representing in their most intimate local attachments the North, East, South and Middle West, were made Trustees of the Fund, with power to perpetuate their number, for its efficient and beneficent administration. The roster of its Trusteeship as constituted by Mr. Peabody contained the names of many who were illustrious, among all who were distinguished. They were Robert C. Winthrop of Massachusetts, Hamilton Fish of New York, Bishop Charles P. McIlwaine of Ohio, General Ulysses S. Grant, Admiral D. C. Farragut, William C. Rives of Virginia, John H. Clifford of Massachusetts, William Aiken of South Carolina, William M. Evarts of New York, William A. Graham of North Carolina, Charles Macalester of Pennsylvania, George Wetmore of New York, Edward A. Bradford of Louisiana, George N. Eaton of Maryland, and George Peabody Russell of Massachusetts.

It was the purpose of Mr. Peabody that his gift should be employed to meet "the educational needs of those portions of our beloved and common country which have suffered from the destructive ravages, and the not less disastrous consequences, of civil war"; which was an euphemistic statement of great delicacy whose meaning pointed to the battle-ravaged and impoverished States of the late Southern Confederacy.

On March 14, 1867, Dr. Barnas Sears, the Presi-

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dent of Brown University at Providence, Rhode Island, upon the solicitation of Mr. Winthrop, the chairman of the Peabody Board, submitted to the Trustees a letter, in which he outlined his views as to the best methods of carrying out Mr. Peabody's purposes,—a letter which Sears had read to Curry, under the oaks at Staunton, as related in an earlier chapter. Five days after the submission of this letter by Dr. Sears to the Board, the Board approved its suggestions; and with a common impulse determined that the author of the plan which it proposed was the proper man to put it into effective operation. Dr. Sears was thereupon elected the first General Agent of the Fund. He had studied in Germany after graduating from Brown University, and had been successively a Professor in the Newton Theological Seminary, Secretary of the Massachusetts State Board of Education, and President of Brown University; and he brought to the work, upon which he entered, and which he continued during his tenure of the office to conduct with great energy and extraordinary tact and diplomacy, a varied wealth of educational and professional experience. His noble and disinterested career as General Agent, in which he labored with unvarying patience and good temper, and with a most admirable willingness to modify and adapt opinions to developed circumstances, is deserving of unqualified praise in the history of education in America. He stimulated, with intelligence and increasing success, State aid to public education; he sought to develop a public sentiment in favor of general education; and he was efficient in aiding to put into the organic and statute laws of a number

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of the Southern States provision for the establishment of free public schools. It was due in no insignificant measure to the energies and labors of the first Agent of the Peabody Fund, that at the time of his death in 1880, all of the eleven States of the South which had constituted the Confederacy, and were the first and chief beneficiaries of Mr. Peabody's endowment, had established public-school systems at least on paper, and were moving onward to their larger development in response to the educational evolution of a new economic and social condition.

"In each of them," writes Dr. A. D. Mayo, in the Education Report for 1903, "model schools had been established by the encouragement of Dr. Sears; teachers' institutes had been subsidized; the Peabody Normal College had been founded, in connection with what remained of Dr. Lindsley's University of Nashville; and in all practical ways the aid of the Fund, with that of the United States Bureau of Education, had been extended to the authorities of the new State and municipal systems. The greatest step of all was the including of the more than 1,000,000 colored children and youth in the new arrangement in all the ex-Confederate States."

Yet, if the work of the former General Agent was important and far-reaching, that which lay before his successor was scarcely less so. Measuring literacy by percentages demonstrated its woeful lack in many of these Southern States. These percentages, taken among whites and negroes together, demonstrate that, as late as ten years after the death of Dr. Sears, the averages ran, counting persons ten years old and upwards, from 14.4 in the State in which there were fewest negroes to 45 in two of those in which the blacks were most numerous. The

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Southern section of the Union was impoverished in many directions almost to penury, by war, and by the reconstruction pillage which followed it; and perhaps nowhere was this more keenly felt than in those States whose percentage of illiteracy was highest. The growth of public sentiment in favor of universal education remained to be further developed and cultivated among a people, who had hitherto believed that the new educational system apparently operated to confer the largest direct benefit upon those who bore the least part of its heavy burden of expense.

Perhaps no one could have appreciated more keenly than did Curry, with his wide experience and profound knowledge of conditions, the magnitude of the task which he had undertaken, and the difficulties and uncertainties that stared him in the face at every onward step. In discussing what Sears had accomplished before him, Curry writes:—

> It would be a hasty judgment to conclude that the work was finished during the period of his agency, or that free schools had been established beyond the possibility of destruction. There were many considerations which would have made it foolish to relax vigorous efforts for keeping alive and strengthening the favoring educational sentiment, and making irrepealable what had been put upon the statute books. . . . Some excellent men had deep-seated convictions, arising from political, social, or religious reasons, adverse to gratuitous State education. The experiment of free schools was not, in all localities, so successful as to clear away doubts, and prejudices, and reverse those traditional habits of thought and action which the experience of all peoples has shown it to be difficult for the mind to free itself from. Time was also needed to pass from private to public schools, to quiet or overcome the

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selfish oppositions of those who engaged in private teaching, and to transfer education to the control of cities and States. Prejudice, interest of teachers, sparseness of population, impatience of taxation, financial depression, were serious hindrances. School-houses had to be built and furnished, teachers to be trained, schools to be graded, friction to be overcome, and an unfamiliar system to be accommodated to environments. The whole work of introducing a new system and improved methods of teaching was beset with many difficulties, one of the chiefest of which was insufficiency of means to pay competent teachers and continue the schools in session for longer periods. (History of the Peabody Fund, pp. 79, 80.)

While Curry, in his administration of the trust committed to his charge, did not hesitate to enter into its smaller details, as occasion demanded, or opportunity afforded, he nevertheless made it his habit to work largely through the already established agencies that had shown themselves of approved efficiency. He spent much of his time in conference with teachers, pastors, school superintendents, and college presidents; he addressed, with renewed interest and enthusiasm, the familiar educational and religious assemblies, with which his recent life had brought him into such frequent and continued contact; he visited schools and colleges, and met and mingled with their students and faculties; he made himself acquainted by private contact and in public speeches with State executive officials and legislative statute-makers; he drew near to the fountain-heads of social and political effectiveness; and directed their flow in streams of irrigating beneficence.

Even before his first annual report was presented to the Peabody Board, in October, 1881, he had al-

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ready addressed the legislatures of Texas, Tennessee and Georgia upon the subject of Education in its varied relations, including those in which it stood to the Peabody Trust. His address to the Tennessee legislature, on normal instruction and the Peabody Normal College at Nashville, was made on March 18, 1881; and on the preceding day he had made his first visit to the College in his new capacity of General Agent, to find the names of Peabody, Sears and Curry illuminating the walls of the chapel, and to meet with an appreciative and enthusiastic greeting on the part of those to whom he spoke.

Of the Normal School at Nashville, which, at this time of Curry's visit, had already been in existence for more than five years, Dr. Mayo has written an account in the "Education Report" for 1883.

"In due time the Peabody Fund, under the expert guidance of Dr. Sears, was brought to the parting of the ways encountered by every public school system everywhere. Even before the death of Dr. Sears, which occurred at Saratoga, New York, July 6, 1880, it was realized that the moderate income from $2,000,000, rarely exceeding $100,000, must be concentrated largely on the training of teachers. In 1875 arrangements were made with the corporation of the University of Nashville, Tenn., for the absorption of its academical features and the use of its buildings in an institution named the Peabody Normal College. With no help from the State, the school was opened on December 1, 1875, in one room, with thirteen female pupils, under the Presidency of Dr. Eben S. Stearns of Massachusetts. The trustees established scholarships for the benefit of all the ex-Confederate States and West Virginia worth $200 a year for two successive years, the number limited to the delegation in Congress of each State. The result was that during the twenty-one years,

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1876–1897, twelve States received $383,584.10 in Peabody scholarships. A crisis in the finances of the College raised the question of its removal to Georgia in 1880; but in the spring of 1881 the city of Nashville and the State of Tennessee came to the rescue." (p. 536.)

The annual appropriation for the College, made by the legislature of Tennessee in 1881, was $10,000; but it was coupled with such conditions that only one-half of that amount was actually realized. In 1883 the State, acceding to a proposition of the Peabody Trustees, made the $10,000 an annual appropriation, unqualified by other conditions or encumbrances; and in 1891 the amount was increased to $15,000 per annum. Dr. Stearns, the first President of the College, died in 1887, and was succeeded in the Presidency by Dr. William H. Payne, who had been Professor of the Art and Science of Teaching in the University of Michigan. Dr. Payne's election and acceptance of the office were brought about by the influences of Curry, who was at that time at home in America, on a leave of absence from his post as United States Minister to Madrid. Dr. Payne held the office until 1901, when he resigned; and in his place the Hon. James D. Porter, a former governor of Tennessee, and a staunch and well-known friend of the College, was elected.

It may be remarked in passing that while the policy of establishing and encouraging normal schools had the favor of the Peabody Board from the beginning, this policy was carefully and conservatively exercised, until the several States had all been committed thoroughly to the more elementary principle of organizing public free schools, and establishing them upon a permanent basis and progressive system.

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On Wednesday, October 5, 1881, the Peabody Board of Trustees assembled in annual meeting at the Fifth Avenue Hotel in New York City. It was their twentieth assembling; and there were present Mr. Winthrop, the chairman, and Messrs. Fish, Aiken, Evarts, Wetmore, Stuart, Barnes, Whipple, Jackson, Hayes, Manning and Lyman. Curry submitted to the Board his first annual report, which in the printed records of the Proceedings of the Peabody Education Fund occupies thirty-one octavo pages.

Appropriately and generously, the General Agent began his report with a tribute to his predecessor, and a review of the work that he had accomplished.

"To succeed one so competent," he writes, "was an embarrassment and a stimulus, exciting fears and giving encouragement. To walk in his footsteps was an impossibility; to profit by his almost unerring wisdom and sagacity has been my daily experience. No one can study the work of Dr. Sears, as I have had occasion to do, without being filled with wonder and admiration at his adaptedness to the difficult and delicate duties he had to discharge. . . . The best eulogy of Dr. Sears is that he met all the requirements."

The Proceedings of the Peabody Education Fund have been published in a series of volumes; and Curry has left behind him a "History of the Peabody Fund," in which his association with the Trust is dealt with at length. It would therefore be a work of supererogation to dwell at length in these pages upon what has been more fully and better presented elsewhere. But in order to keep before the mind of the reader Curry's figure and life and mental attitude towards what had come to engage his best energies and most eager efforts, some passages from this first

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report of his may be appropriately quoted here. After further comment upon the character of Dr. Sears and upon the value of his services, Curry proceeds to point out the need of a constant and continued vigilance on the part of the Board, that no step gained might be lost, and that other and pressing demands might be properly met. With a yet unassured confidence in the ultimate establishment of a fixed public opinion in behalf of general education, and with a large experience in dealing with legislative bodies, he felt it uncertain to rely alone upon the statute-books for the systems of public instruction, and unsafe to relax any vigilance or omit any use of energetic effort. "*Nulla vestigia retrorsum;*" "*Vigilantibus, non dormientibus,*" seemed to be the charts by which he sought to direct his sails over a yet tempestuous and uncertain sea.

"Free schools," he declares, "have a ceaseless enemy in the illiteracy of the masses. Ignorance does not feel its needs. Enlightenment must come from without. The uneducated do not appreciate the import and value of education. When to fearful illiteracy there are superadded changed social conditions, remodelling of laws and constitutions, and general pecuniary prostration at the South, there will be apparent and imperative need for money that State and local taxes and ecclesiastical and private benefactions cannot supply."

These statements were truisms, so potent in themselves, and so well known to the Trustees, as to seem to require no reiteration. And yet it was as absolutely a necessity for Curry himself, and for the members of the Board, to carry them constantly in their view, as it is for the mariner to watch the veering of his compass' needle in sailing his charted ways.

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"Since my appointment," he continues, "I have visited all the States included in our work, except Florida and West Virginia, and by special request have made addresses before the legislatures of Texas, Tennessee and Georgia. These visits have given me an insight into the workings of school systems, and a personal acquaintance with school and other public officers, which must be of much value. As your comprehensive plans are carried on under State auspices, mere office work will not enable me to accomplish them. Besides the need of awakening and keeping alive the public mind on the general subject of free education, there must be conferences with law-makers and school officers, and the stimulation of such legislative action as will consummate and perfect the widely beneficent ends you have had so steadily in view.

"Although, for convenience, the late avowal of the Trustees as to their future purpose has been termed a 'new departure,' yet from the first consultations two grand objects were determined upon. 'The urgent and pressing physical needs of an almost impoverished people' precluding them 'from making, by unaided efforts, such advances in education as were desirable, the Trustees decided the establishment of public schools and the training of public school teachers to be the wisest disposition of the Fund. Free school education and Normal Schools were the objective points, and these, looking to permanent results, have had the support of the Trustees throughout the entire history of the Trust. Instead of distributing the income of the Fund promiscuously, aid has been concentrated on a few central schools of a high order, to serve as examples and incentives, rather than on a larger number of inferior or less influential schools. During the present year help has been given to a few schools, and has been promised to a few others, in communities where insufficient State revenues have been generously supplemented by local taxation.

"The instruction of the Board to apply the greater por-

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tion of the income of the Fund hereafter to the education of teachers for the public schools has met with general and decided approval.

". . . Special aid has been given to Teachers' Institutes, defined by some one as 'locomotive Normal Schools.' . . . Normal Schools, as having continuous life and influence, and coming more literally within the purview of the instruction of the Trustees, have had much thought and labor. Permanent arrangements are needed to train the multitudes of teachers which our school systems demand. The short-lived Institutes are not attended by all, or by the most incompetent, and cannot give thorough professional discipline and training. Not a few summer months, but toilsome years, are indispensable to teacher-training.

"The Normal College at Nashville has been regarded by the Trustees with peculiar favor, the purpose being to build up an institution of very high order, and a fit monument of the benefaction of Mr. Peabody. For years the College was sustained largely by their donations, efforts to secure direct State aid and co-operation being fruitless. The Trustees of the University of Nashville gave what aid they could with their limited means, but there was an increasing disappointment at the want of co-operation on the part of the State. You were, therefore, constrained to consider seriously the withdrawal of your donation, and the giving of help to a State which would show by adequate pecuniary aid a higher appreciation of a Normal College. It is needless to recapitulate the protracted and embarrassing negotiations which oppressed the mind and impaired the health of the late General Agent. Suffice it to say that such assurance and guaranties of permanent assistance were obtained as to convince Dr. Sears that the entire or chief burden of sustaining the College would not hereafter fall on the Peabody Fund. The question of withdrawing aid from the College was therefore cheerfully abandoned."

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The report then states the agreement which had been reached during the year, by which aid, amounting to several thousand dollars annually, was guaranteed by the State of Tennessee to the Nashville Normal College; and indicates the strong probability, which later became a reality, that more liberal appropriations would soon follow. This statement is succeeded by a more particular and detailed account of the work that was then in progress, in connection with the Fund, in each of the States of West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Mississippi, Tennessee, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Texas; and the report closes with a table, showing what portions of the total expenditure of $50,375.00, made during the year, had been applied respectively to Teachers' Institutes, permanent schools, Nashville scholarships, and educational journals in the several States.

This first report of the new General Agent made, as was to have been expected, a very favorable impression upon the Trustees of the Fund; and is set out here, in its somewhat dry details, both as showing the conditions surrounding Curry's undertaking, and as illustrating his comprehensive and immediate grasp of the situation. After hearing it read, there could remain no doubt in the minds of the members of the Board, if such a doubt had even for a moment existed, that they had found the right man for the place.

His diary for the year, 1881, under date of October 5, contains the simple entry:—

> Trustees met. All present except Waite, Chief Justice, and Mr. Russell.
>
> Read my first Report. Much complimented.

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During the succeeding official year Curry continued his work upon the lines and according to the methods theretofore pursued, and with a steady and glowing enthusiasm and an ever unabated industry. He attended the local Institutes, visited schools and colleges, made speeches at educational meetings, and availed himself of whatever opportunities offered themselves to his alert and eager intelligence of advancing his cause. He paid especial attention, too, to arousing the interest of public men and State officials in his work, and before the anniversary of his first annual report came around again, he had made addresses in behalf of State aid to education before the legislatures of West Virginia, South Carolina, Georgia, Mississippi and Texas.

The progress of his work, and the misconceptions of many as to its significance, may be read in an extract from his second Report, made to the Trustees October 4, 1882:—

Although the administration of the Peabody Fund has been in operation since 1867, and twenty full reports have been published and widely distributed, it affords matter for surprise that inaccurate notions are entertained as to the intention of Mr. Peabody, the amount of the Fund, and the oft-declared policy of the Trustees. Application for aid for the most diverse objects—educational, religious, charitable, personal—are constantly made. It seems almost impossible to eradicate two misapprehensions; first, that the Fund was intended as a charity for the poor; and secondly, that all schools, complying with the prescribed conditions precedent, are entitled to promote assistance. One of the most urgent pleas for help is that the community is poor. Much as this appeal may excite personal sympathy, the Fund is not eleemosynary, but has a distinct and well-defined object. As the income of the Fund is

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limited, only a few schools can be aided; and the Trustees, in accordance with the wish of Mr. Peabody, by judicious selections of schools and localities, and by appropriations limited as to amount and time, have sedulously striven to aid in the establishment of a permanent system of "free schools for the whole people." The prime purpose of aiding nascent school-systems of the Southern States, so as to enable them to attain to permanency and efficiency, has been kept steadily in view. Thus to stimulate communities and States has required wisdom, patience, firmness, acquaintance with men and educational systems, large correspondence and much travel.

Another error, not so prevalent, is that the Fund is for the exclusive benefit of the white race. By carefully chosen language, both races were included in the benefaction; and the late and the present General Agent have esteemed it a patriotic and Christian privilege to carry out the wishes of the Founder of the Trust and of the Trustees, that no discrimination betwixt races should be made beyond what a wise administration required. In every State aid is given to the colored race and the General Agent has frequently besought and obtained from State Superintendents special efforts in behalf of colored schools and colored teachers.

This statement of Curry's in regard to the attitude of the Southern States towards the education of the negroes carries with it a significance, which it doubtless gave him pleasure to indicate. All of these States, by the time at which he wrote, had recovered themselves from the political and social chaos into which they had been plunged by the War and by Reconstruction; and though none of them had emerged from the poverty that had been thrust upon them by these two equally tragic episodes, they were already affording an example, unparalleled,

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perhaps in the history of the world, of unselfish purpose to lift up and elevate by education a servile and untaught race, that had been so short a time before but "hewers of wood and drawers of water" among them.

"One cannot but contemplate with intense joy," he continues, "the potent agencies which are at work to place beyond contingency or peril the free-school systems. If it were not invidious, it would be pleasant to specify certain Southern newspapers, which, although chiefly political, have given column after column to accounts of Normal School and Institute exercises, and to convincing arguments in favor of free schools. Unusual as such mention may be, it would be unjust not to refer to the valuable labors of Rev. A. D. Mayo, one of the editors of the 'New England Journal of Education,' whose addresses in Virginia, North Carolina and South Carolina have been stimulating and instructive, and whose ministry of education has been productive of much good."

Curry then gives an account of the "Slater Fund," about the organization and work of which President Hayes, one of its incorporators, had already been seeking his advice.

"On 2 March, 1882," he continues in his second report, "John F. Slater of Norwich, Connecticut, gave one million of dollars in trust to several gentlemen, who have been created by the State of New York a body politic and corporate by the name of 'The Trustees of the Slater Fund.' Two of the members of this Board, Ex-President Hayes and Chief Justice Waite, are among the corporators. The general object of the trust is to apply, for a term of years, the income to 'the uplifting of the lately emancipated people of the Southern States and their posterity, by conferring on them the blessings of a Christian education,' so as 'to make them good men and good citizens.' While the

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prosecution of the general object is left to the discretion and largest liberty of the Trustees, Mr. Slater indicated as desirable objects 'the training of teachers from among the people requiring to be taught' and 'the encouragement of such institutions as are most effectually useful in promoting this training of teachers.'"

That the Trustees of the Slater Fund were already largely relying on Curry's judgment and experience in perfecting their organization and mapping out their work is indicated by the letters which Mr. Hayes had written him.

"I thank you," wrote the ex-President, from Fremont, Ohio, under date of April 20, 1882, "for the speech and your letter. The consolidation of educational funds has a great deal to recommend it. We have suffered vastly in Ohio by scattering among thirty or forty colleges funds which would have amply endowed three or four. But it is idle to criticise. We must make all we can out of existing facts.

"I shall want to confer with you about the line of action that is wise for the Slater Trustees to take, and would like to know of your probable movements for the next two months. If a charter is granted, as we expect, by the State of New York, our headquarters will be in the City of N. Y., and I shall go there perhaps two or three times yearly.

"I shall take occasion to correct the misapprehension as to the work of the Peabody Fund among the colored people."

And again Mr. Hayes writes to Curry on the same subject:—

FREMONT, O.,
5 July, 1882.

MY DEAR SIR:—I send you herewith the act incorporating the Trustees of the Slater Fund, and Mr. Slater's letter defining the Trust.

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At the first meeting held in New York in May, the trustees appointed a Finance Committee, an Executive Committee, consisting of the President of the Board, the Secretary, President Gilman, Gov. Colquitt, Dr. Boyce and Hon. Wm. E. Dodge; and a Committee on Rules. President Gilman is permanent Secretary. Mr. Jessup is Treasurer.

The funds were invested by the Finance Committee at about six percent interest. The rate of interest of the securities taken is six percent, but a small premium was paid.

Inasmuch as the income, only, can be expended for the purposes of the Trust, no expenditure will be made until after next December, when the first income will be available. In the meantime a General Agent will be appointed, and a policy and plans matured. The subject of a General Agent and plans are before the Executive Committee for consideration and report. The next meeting of the Board will be in October, in New York, at the time the Peabody Trustees hold their meeting.

Throughout the proceedings thus far the Peabody Trust has been the model in the mind of Mr. Slater, and of the Trustees of his appointment.

No person has been fixed upon for General Agent. I am inclined to think that a Southern man should be selected. Dr. Haygood and Mr. Orr of Georgia have been suggested. Neither is a candidate, and I do not know that either would accept. Dr. Steiner of Md. is in the same position. Can you aid us with a confidential suggestion? Indeed, after reading the trust deed, may I not hope for suggestions from you on the whole matter? One of the points which I deem important is such an administration of the trust as will strengthen the cause of Education in the South, especially for the Colored. It seems to me that one of the best things now doing by you with the Peabody Fund is the aid afforded to those who are creating a sound public sentiment on the subject of Education in the South.

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I would like to preserve the particular copy of the Slater trust paper which I send you,—but keep it as long as you wish.

Sincerely,

R. B. HAYES.

HON. J. L. M. CURRY,
RICHMOND.

Another of the "potent agencies" for education of the South, which rejoiced Curry's heart, and of which he also makes mention in his report of October, 1882, to the Peabody Trustees, is the endowment of the "Tulane Administrators," which resulted in the establishment of The Tulane University at New Orleans.

"Another illustration," he writes, "of honorable munificence, more local in its benefits, is the gift of Paul Tulane, of New Jersey. To certain persons, incorporated under the name of 'The Administrators of the Tulane Education Fund,' Mr. Tulane, in June, 1882, executed a trust-deed, conveying certain real-estate, in the city of New Orleans, State of Louisiana, 'for the promotion and encouragement of intellectual, moral, and industrial education among the white young persons in the city of New Orleans, and for the advancement of letters, the arts and sciences therein. . . .'

"Such benefactions, for such unselfish purposes," comments Curry, "are honorable to our race and country, and their influence will survive with increasing strength and usefulness. Mr. Slater says: 'I am encouraged to the execution, in this charitable foundation, of a long-cherished purpose by the eminent wisdom and success that has marked the conduct of the Peabody Education Fund in a field of operation not remote from that contemplated by this Trust.' The letter of Mr. Tulane furnishes internal evidence, corroborated by the statement of the counsel

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who drew the papers, that the gift of Mr. Peabody and the administration of the Fund afforded much assistance in shaping the terms of the trust.

"Stimulating and valuable as are these gifts, the Southern States cannot rely on individual beneficence. Education is a civil as well as a parental duty. It is of the essence of true manhood. By no other means can man make the best of himself and fulfil his obligations. It is his inalienable birthright. What is true of all men is especially true of an American citizen. General intelligence is necessary to popular liberty, to the safety and perpetuity of our representative institutions."

In May, 1882, Curry, as their General Agent, presented on behalf of the Peabody Trustees to the United States Congress a petition, calling the attention of that body to a former memorial of the Board, which had been presented two years earlier; and renewing the solicitation contained in the memorial, that the Federal Government's aid be given in co-operation with the public school systems in the Southern States.

In October, the Trustees of the Fund held their regular annual meeting in New York, to which Curry reported satisfactory progress in the work under his charge. He had visited nearly all the Southern States, and by request had addressed the legislatures of North Carolina, Florida, Alabama, Tennessee and Arkansas, in each of which States the movement in behalf of general education had aroused the interest of its public men. He reported further at this time:—

All the State Superintendents have been cheerful in their co-operation with the General Agent, and zealous in their respective States for the Public Schools. It would

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be ungrateful and unjust not to make mention of the aid often given by him to the Bureau of Education at Washington. General Eaton, beyond a technical discharge of office work, delights also to advance the general cause by his abundant information, wide experience, personal counsel, and eloquent voice.

The year has been marked by the usual assemblages of educators. The discussions are taking a wide scope, and embracing problems connected with education which show the increasing importance of the subject. . . . There is a growing recognition of the alliance betwixt industrial and mental training. . . . In some of the States a new phase of the free school question is presenting itself. Kentucky has recently stricken from her statutes an unwise discrimination betwixt the races in the disbursement of school funds; but in the flush of our rejoicings over such a triumph of patriotism and generous self-sacrifice, we find a disposition elsewhere to adopt what Kentucky, after trial, has cast aside. It is not proper in this Report to mention, much less to discuss, the causes which have created this hurtful sentiment in favor of throwing upon each race the burden of educating the children of that race. Were we to concede all that is claimed as justifying the discrimination, it might be conclusively replied that the confinement of the school revenues pro rata to the race paying the taxes is a measure that originates in narrow prejudice, or is punitive for certain alleged political offenses, and is, therefore, an unstable and unworthy ground for the legislation of Christian statesmen.

Public education at public cost has its best defence in the obligation to preserve national life.

This attitude of Curry's in favor of meting out equal and exact justice in the distribution of State funds in aid of education to both whites and blacks was one which he had assumed long before his connection with the Peabody Fund, and had publicly

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announced as early as 1866, in his speech at Marion, in which he had advised the people of the South to pay of their poverty for the education of the dense mass of negro ignorance in their midst, upon which the readjustment of a revolutionized society had conferred the privileges of an unintelligent citizenship. The preservation of the national life seemed to him impossible without the education of the citizenship which goes to make up that life; and in this view there was no divergence by him from the democratic attitude on the subject of education, which was held by his political exemplar, and the founder of the school of governmental thought to which he had always maintained allegiance. Mr. Jefferson had not only been an advocate of State aid to higher education, but he had insisted that the State University, in the properly constructed educational system, should be the capstone of the common schools, supported by local taxation. For him the common school was an essential part of the free government of the individual citizen, whose functions should be:—

(1) To give to every citizen the information he needs for the transaction of his own business;

(2) To enable him to calculate for himself, and to express and preserve his ideas, his contracts and accounts in writing;

(3) To improve, by reading, his morals and faculties;

(4) To understand his duties to his neighbors and country, and to discharge with competence the functions confided to him by either;

(5) To know his rights; to exercise with order and justice those he retains; to choose with discretion the fiduciary of those he delegates; and to notice their conduct with diligence, with candor and judgment.

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(6) And, in general, to observe with intelligence and faithfulness all the social relations under which he shall be placed.

The "readjustment" by one or more of the Gulf States of some of the bonds included in Mr. Peabody's donation was engaging the attention of the Trustees at this time. In 1886 the Peabody scholarships were withdrawn from those States; but in 1892 they were restored. At the meeting of the Board in October, 1883, a memorial was presented, signed by Bishop Thomas U. Dudley, Dr. W. H. Whitsett, Dr. John A. Broadus, Rabbi A. Moses, Vice-Chancellor John G. Simrall, Dr. Basil Manly, and eighteen others, prominent citizens of Kentucky, praying that their State might also be included among those receiving the benefits of the Peabody Fund. The memorial was referred to a committee consisting of Messrs. Waite, Fish and Jackson of the Trustees, who in their report embodied the following resolution:—

That this Board will cordially unite with the people of Kentucky in any effort that may be made to create an interest in favor of education by means of public schools, and the General Agent is requested, if an opportunity should be afforded him, to address the Legislature on the subject, and to do what else he can to direct attention to the importance of making ample provision for the permanent establishment and maintenance of such a system of schools in the State.

This report was accepted by the Board; and on the 25th of January following, Curry, by special invitation, appeared before the Legislature of Kentucky and delivered an address along the lines of the

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Peabody Board's resolution. The Legislature soon afterwards passed a bill providing for great improvements in the public school system; but the aid to the State on the part of the Peabody Board appears to have been little more than that of a tender of moral encouragement; for it seems that no disbursements of money were ever made from the Fund to education in Kentucky.

Some of the entries in Curry's diary about this time are not without a personal interest. In December, 1883, Matthew Arnold visited Richmond, and was hospitably received by many of its prominent citizens. Curry writes in his diary under date of the 18th of that month:—

> Called on Mr. Matthew Arnold. Heard him lecture at night on "Literature and Science."

And on the day following:—

> With Mr. Arnold visited two colored schools.

Early in 1884 he writes:—

> January 30.—Called on George Bancroft at Washington. Had a very pleasant interview.

But the journal is unfortunately silent as to the impressions which were made on him, at this time, either by the English author of "Literature and Dogma," or by the great American, whose monument is his "History of the United States."

In April, 1884, he was elected President of the Board of Trustees of the State Normal College for Women, at Farmville, Virginia, which had been recently established by the Virginia Legislature, and to the Principalship of which Dr. William H. Ruffner, whom Curry ranked as an educator with Mann,

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Sears and Wickersham, was chosen at the same meeting. Curry maintained a deep interest in this institution, and continued President of its Board until October 1, 1885, when he resigned the presidency, though still remaining a Trustee until April 25, 1893.

At the ensuing October meeting of the Peabody Board, he made his usual report, which contained an interesting paragraph concerning those educational institutions in Virginia, which derived aid from the Fund:—

> Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute, under the administration of its accomplished president (General S. C. Armstrong) is almost an anomaly in educational work. Its success has been extraordinary. . . .
>
> The Normal and Collegiate Institute at Petersburg,—the instructors of which are colored,—is well sustained by the State, and closed a year of good work. The Legislature authorized a State Normal School for Girls, which has been located at Farmville. Litigation embarrassed and delayed the action of the Trustees. The difficulties being removed, the school will soon be opened under the headship of Hon. W. H. Ruffner.
>
> A Convention of County Superintendents and four Teachers' Institutes have been valuable agencies in stimulating and directing educational energies. One thousand and twenty-eight teachers attended the Institutes,—nearly double the number enrolled any single year before.

Curry's busy life in this period may be appreciated by a glimpse at the varied activities in which he was engaged,—activities which demanded the constant exercise of physical no less than of mental energies. First and foremost, he was the General Agent of the Peabody Fund, and in the discharge of that office,

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he had made out of every legislative chamber in the South, a new and very vital sort of pulpit from which to preach the gospel of training for all people, high and low, black and white. He delivered addresses during the year 1884 before the legislatures of Virginia, Mississippi, Kentucky, Louisiana, and South Carolina; and he spoke before a joint committee of the Virginia Legislature in favor of a State Normal School, and to a House Committee of the United States Congress on the subject of Federal aid to State education. He was a member of the Board of Trustees of Richmond College and of that of the Farmville Woman's College, and was President of both of these boards, giving to the discharge of the duties incident to the positions he occupied on them a full measure of his time, energies and talents. His services were constantly in demand, and scarcely less constantly given to attending and addressing educational and religious conventions and assemblies; and he filled in the spare moments of a life, busy to overflowing, with commencement speeches at schools, colleges and Universities. The man's vitality of mind and body seems almost super-normal in the light of his unremitting work. He served on the Board of Directors of the Richmond Woollen Mills; he taught a Sunday-school class with the undimmed and undiminished enthusiasm of his earlier religious work; he took part in pastors' conferences; he married couples; he preached funeral sermons; he participated in the work of committees on foreign missions, and for aiding the advancement of religion and education among the negroes of the Southern States. In fine, he was preacher, teacher, man of affairs, politician, lecturer, educator and philan-

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thropist at once; and in all the relations of these varied pursuits, he left a vivid impress of his personality upon whatever he touched. Of the demands made upon his physical energies some idea may be formed from the statement that, in his widely distributed work during the year 1884, he travelled altogether a distance of more than seventeen thousand miles.

A few days after the meeting of the Peabody Trustees in October, 1884, he went to Georgia, where on the 8th of the month he attended the Centennial meeting of the Georgia Baptist Association at the town of Washington in that State. During his visit to Washington he was a guest at the hospitable home of General Robert Toombs, who had been a conspicuous figure in the ante-bellum discussions of slavery, state rights and strict construction; and after serving as Secretary of State for the Confederacy, and as a general in the army of Northern Virginia, had sought England as a place of refuge succeeding Appomattox. He had come back to his native land after a brief period of exile; but even at the time of Curry's visit he was still "irreconcilable" in his refusal to take the oath of allegiance to the Federal government.

In Curry's diary of the time of this visit to Georgia, we find the brief exhibition of a reminiscent and tender mood:—

Saturday, October 11.—Left for Lincoln County in a buggy. Night at Jesse Cartledge's, where I was born.

Sunday, October 12.—Talked to Sunday school, and preached at Double Branches, where I heard my first sermon.

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In early January of the following year he was in Washington, D. C., working for the passage of the Blair bill by the Federal Congress. In the latter days of March he was again in Washington:—

March 27.—To Washington and back.

Saw Secretaries Lamar and Garland, Assistant Secretary Porter, and Gen. Eaton and Atkins. Lamar asked if I would accept place of head of Bureau of Education, and I replied in the negative.

Early in May he was the recipient of a letter from President Hayes inviting him to confer with the Slater Board.

In response to this invitation he went to New York; and his diary under date of May 20, 1885, contains the following:—

Attended by invitation the annual meeting of the Trustees of the Slater Fund, to confer as to the policy of the Board.

Talked an hour or more, giving my opinion, and answering questions.

Dined at the University Club. Present, M. K. Jesup, host; President Hayes; Chief Justice M. R. Waite; D. C. Gilman, President of Johns Hopkins; J. A. Stewart; W. E. Dodge; Dr. A. G. Haygood; Hon. G. J. Orr of Georgia.

"In the autumn of 1885," he writes, "I was in Southwest Virginia and East Tennessee, attending associations and making speeches in behalf of Education, Missions, &c. During my absence Mrs. Curry received a letter from Hon. Thos. F. Bayard, addressed to me, offering in behalf of President Cleveland the position of Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to Spain. For some days neither letter nor telegram could reach me. Finally at Rogersville, Tennessee, the unexpected news reached me, and I took the first train for Asheville to join Mrs.

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Curry and discuss the question of acceptance. After two visits to Washington, I saw Mr. Bayard and the President and accepted the position; but concluded to have no publication thereof until after the meeting of the Peabody Trustees, which was to occur soon in October."

On October 1, 1885, Curry resigned his position as President of the Board of Trustees of the Woman's Normal College at Farmville, retaining, however, his office of Trustee until April 25, 1893. Six days later he submitted his annual report to the Peabody Board, at their regular meeting in New York City. After reading the report, he presented to the Board the following communication:—

RICHMOND, VA., Oct. 7, 1885.

To the Trustees of the Peabody Education Fund:

Having consented to accept from the Government an important diplomatic trust, I must ask you not to renew my appointment as General Agent, unless it be for a very brief period, so as to prevent any confusion from a too sudden severance of the connection which I hold with the Fund.

In closing a relation, which to me has been uninterruptedly pleasant, you will pardon me for expressing my most grateful appreciation of the confidence and of the personal regard with which you have honored me. From the honored Chairman and every Trustee, I have had only kindness and generous support. The performance of my duties, not easy as I interpreted them, has been a labor of love. Mr. Peabody was the most liberal benefactor the South ever had, and his benefaction came at a time when she was in the depth of poverty and anguish. Education being necessary to material advancement, and in every mental and moral relation, his munificence took most wisely the direction of aiding in the education of the youth of both races. The initial effort of the Trustees was to stim-

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ulate the establishment of public school systems, and afterwards to insure their permanency and constant improvement. As a factor in the production of these accomplished results, no single agency has been so potent and beneficial as the Peabody Education Fund. The next and correlated step was to labor for the improvement of the teaching in the public schools. This has been effected in a marked degree by sustaining Teachers' Institutes and Normal Schools. The States are gradually incorporating into their school systems, and sustaining by annual grants, these most effective instrumentalities for the improvement of those systems. The Normal College at Nashville has emerged from the difficulties which five years ago imperilled its life, and now, with the cordial co-operation of Tennessee, is vindicating its right to a place among the best institutions of its kind in the United States.

Instead of confining myself to office work,—to the humble but useful avocation of almoner for the distribution of the income of the Fund,—I have sought to do something towards the creation of a healthier educational sentiment, and to identify the Trust with the most advanced educational progress. Every door of access to the people,—to schools, colleges, legislatures,—has been thrown wide open to your representative, and if good has not been done, the fault is his. Everywhere I have advocated the uplifting of the lately emancipated and enfranchised negro, and upon no part of my work do I look back with greater personal satisfaction.

In the spirit of the Trust, and in known harmony with the opinions of Mr. Peabody, I have labored assiduously to renew and cultivate a feeling of broad and catholic patriotism, to cement in closest fraternity all sections and peoples of the Union, to bury discords and strifes, and to lift up to a higher plane than that of sectional animosity or of angry prejudices. To-day, thank God, the South is as loyal to the Union, and as ready to pour out blood and

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treasure for the national honor and national safety as Ohio or Massachusetts.

What has been achieved in the States which are the beneficiaries of the Trust, since you organized as a Board in Washington City, on the 8th of February, 1867, is incredible. There have been revolutions in labor, economic industries, customs, traditions, feelings, convictions, laws and institutions, any one of which considered singly would mark a social era, a civil epoch. No people ever accomplished so much for education, in so brief a period, under such crushing embarrassments, as the South has done. If the General Government, heeding the earnest words and the unanswerable arguments of this Board, will come to the relief of States struggling with heroic energy to meet the responsibilities of their new life, problems of gigantic import will be aided in their solution, and the faith and the hope of the patriot and the Christian will be strengthened in reference to the success and the perpetuity of the Republic.

The policy of your Board is so well established, and the method of administration has been so simplified, that my withdrawal will put you to no inconvenience.

Thanking you for your numerous kindnesses, and wishing great success to the work of the Fund, I am,

Yours most respectfully,

J. L. M. CURRY.

On motion of Mr. Evarts, this communication of Curry's, which sets forth in perspicuous summary the purposes and achievements of the Peabody Trustees on the one hand, and the methods, aims and aspirations that had animated himself on the other, was referred to the Executive Committee of the Board for consideration. Mr. Winthrop, for the Executive Committee, on the next day submitted

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the following resolutions, which were unanimously adopted by the Board:—

Resolved, That the Trustees of the Peabody Education Fund have received with sincere regret the announcement of Dr. Curry, that, having accepted the appointment of United States Minister to Madrid, he must decline a re-election as the General Agent of this Trust; that the Trustees desire to enter on their records the deep sense which they entertain of the fidelity and devotion with which he has discharged his duties for more than four years past, and of the great success which has attended his labors;—and that the grateful regards of the Trustees will follow him into his new sphere of public service, with their best wishes for his health and happiness.

Resolved, That the appointment of a General Agent be postponed for consideration until the next meeting of the Board, with authority to the Executive Committee, in the meantime, to make such temporary arrangements for the conduct of the General Agency as they may find necessary.

Curry was requested to continue to act as General Agent until his departure for Spain; and Dr. S. A. Green, the Secretary of the Board, was requested and authorized to serve temporarily as General Agent in Curry's absence.

It is interesting to note that at this meeting President Cleveland and Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan were elected to membership on the Board of Trustees. Mr. Morgan was chosen Treasurer and held that office uninterruptedly thereafter. For four years Curry had been engaged in the most fruitful work offered to any man in Southern life. The paralysis of war had at last passed away and hope everywhere reigned. He had a country which he "could love" and which he was about to represent in a foreign

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land. This service, distinguished and agreeable as it was, must be considered as a mere interlude in the man's essential career. The Peabody Trustees perceived this and kept his work waiting for him. The great preacher had found his ultimate pulpit in the schoolhouses and legislative chambers of eleven States awakening to a new national life. His general theme was an efficient citizenship in a reunited republic. He perceived the real menace of the ignorant negro. He saw the necessity of industrial preparation. He felt the need on the white man's part of the philosophic view and the sense of obligation. He had faith in the justice and good sense of the people, and he knew their sturdy power. His appeal was to the heart and his method the method of the orator. Looked at in the clear light of another generation, the group of men who preceded and were now gathered about Curry, as he began his notable work, was worthy of such a period in our educational history. Samuel Chapman Armstrong, a young man of original genius and consecration, schooled under Mark Hopkins, was beginning, on the shores of Hampton Roads, a revolutionary movement for negro education destined to pour into that misguided work a stream of common sense and high purpose which has served to steady and direct it until this day. He saw that the first necessity was a military government of these negro youth, practically and morally let loose into infinite space. Then must follow a training, all the way up, in work, the boys or girls being expected to furnish to a considerable extent the means for their schooling and support. The schooling must be co-educational, that the educated colored boy could

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have for his wife an educated colored girl. The religious education should be Christian in the broad sense that it left the worship of creed and ecclesiastical polity out of account. As soon as possible the school at Hampton was set free from dependence on any association and organized under a board of directors. He also understood that any system of schooling of the colored people, to be effective and permanent, while it might depend largely on the North for pecuniary support, must commend itself to the common school public of the Southern State in which it was set up. Thus he persuaded the Legislature of Virginia to appropriate $10,000 annually of its national industrial school fund, with the superintendent of public instruction and other gentlemen of the State as advisory trustees. He left the classical upper story out of his system of instruction, organizing the school as far as possible according to the methods of the best primary and secondary graded schools of the day. The normal training of the superior students was at once established, under competent management, in connection with the practice department, the Butler common school, afterwards named the Whittier.

William H. Ruffner, a young Presbyterian clergyman and scientist, as first State Superintendent of Public Instruction in Virginia, was planting the American Common School upon a philosophic basis, from which it could never be dislodged in the statutes and affections of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Men like John Eaton, Edward S. Joynes, William Preston Johnston, Calvin H. Wiley, Atticus G. Haygood, were striking hands with Armstrong, Sears and others of their kind in Northern life and develop-

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ing a cause and a quality of leadership to which the best of the younger generation could repair. The home of the late President of the Southern Confedacy had been reconstructed into a public schoolhouse, and as a background of infinite dignity and inspiration to the whole idea had stood the example of Lee quietly at work, reorganizing the old Washington College into the institution which should also bear his honored name.

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CHAPTER XVI

THE LAND OF THE ALHAMBRA

CURRY's invitation to represent the United States Government at Madrid came in a flattering way, and all the circumstances of his designation to one of the foremost offices in the foreign service were well calculated to arouse the recipient's interest and to kindle his enthusiasm.

Mr. Bayard, the Secretary of State, wrote to him as follows:—

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
WASHINGTON, Sept. 7, 1885.

Personal and Confidential.

MY DEAR SIR:—I wish to enlist you in the public service, and believe that an opportunity for high usefulness is open to you, in which it may be in your power to render important service to our country.

The mission to Spain is now vacant, and I consider that point in our foreign relations as second in importance to none.

Nothing could exhibit to you my personal trust and confidence in your character and capacity more than this expression of my wish to see you the representative of the United States at Madrid. If you wish to consult with me before accepting the trust, let me hear from you,—and see you here.

I can give you a room in my house (1413 Massachusetts Avenue), where we can have free conference.

Sincerely yours,
T. F. BAYARD.

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Upon learning of the tender of the Spanish Mission, Curry's mind turned at once to his friend, Mr. Winthrop. From the little town in East Tennessee, where the news reached him, he wrote at once to the venerable President of the Peabody Board.

ROGERSVILLE, TENN.,
Confidential. 14 Sept., '85.

DEAR MR. WINTHROP:—

For nearly a week I have been near "Cumberland Gap," remote from railways and telegraph. Arriving here a few minutes ago, I find a letter and a mailed telegram from Mrs. Curry, startling me with the announcement that President Cleveland tenders me the Mission to Spain. The tender was suggested, of course, by no solicitation of mine. It is a surprise. In my confusion, I turn to you as my most valued and trusted friend. What shall I do? I rather suspect Mrs. Curry would not be unwilling to spend a year or two abroad. My Peabody work out of the way, I should not be unwilling to go to Italy or Austria; but I love the Peabody work; I am under obligation to the Trustees; and I value, as the most prized and pleasant of all earth's gifts, wife and children excepted, your friendship and my labor with you. Pardon me for the utterance, but I love you as I have never loved any man outside my father's family; and I can consent to do nothing to which you object. Help me in the dilemma. I know nothing beyond what I have written, save that I am summoned to Washington. I shall reach Asheville to-morrow, and may leave for Washington on the 16th.

Ever yours sincerely,
J. L. M. CURRY.

HON. ROBT. C. WINTHROP,
BROOKLINE, MASS.

The effect of this letter of Curry's upon Mr. Winthrop may be best shown by the latter's reply,

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evidently written upon the day of its receipt, and illustrated with a scriptural text of which the communication itself is an exposition.

For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me (*Job 3:25*).

BROOKLINE, MASS'TTS.,
16 Sept., 1885.

MY DEAR DR. CURRY:—

Your "confidential" letter of the 14th inst., from Rogersville, Tenn., has just reached me, and has filled me with consternation. I had written to you at Asheville yesterday, after examining the proofs of your Report, and my soul was at ease. I looked forward to our approaching meeting at New York with confidence, and felt that our Peabody work was secure for a long future. I felt, too, that take it all in all, it was the greatest work of our time and land, and that the names of good Dr. Sears and yourself would go down to posterity embalmed by the memory of the highest services to the South and the whole country.

The idea of losing you from our labors came strongly upon me, when the new Administration first came in. And if our friend Bayard had at once offered you a first-class mission, I should at least have acquiesced in its being deservedly assigned. The text which I have written at the top of this letter was then often in my mind. But as one after another of the foreign appointments was filled by men inferior to yourself, and as your own assurances of unfailing devotion to our work were renewed to me by letter and by lip, I had abandoned all apprehensions, and had looked forward to being lovingly associated with you in the cause of Southern Education for the little remnant of my own life.

I do not wonder that Bayard has been tempted to pluck you from our hand. But for him to propose to plump you and dear Mrs. Curry down into the midst of a raging cholera at Madrid, is certainly of doubtful kindness.

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Were there a great exigency there, you would not shrink from such a service at any risk, I well know. But is there anything to be done at Madrid, which can be compared in importance to the work you are now doing so admirably and so effectively at home? Will any honor ever attach to your name, by a service at Madrid, in any degree comparable to that which you have won and are winning in your present sphere?

But all this is aside from the real issue, to which I hasten to turn. It is in no spirit of flattery or compliment that I say, that you are the very pivot of George Peabody's great Southern benefaction. All its success turns upon you. To take you from your post at this moment, would be like taking the pilot of the "Puritan" away, when she was just on the starting line. The American cup would go to the "Genesta." Seriously, I am afraid your withdrawal from our work, so suddenly and at such short notice, would not only embarrass and perplex us terribly, but would awaken feelings in our Board which would afflict me.

Were such a separation six months off,—so that there would be time for deliberation,—sad as the prospect would be to me, it would be less appalling. When good Dr. Sears died, I was able, with the aid of his daughter, to carry our work along for many months. But I am older and feebler now, and should not know where to turn. Our Board, too, is in a crippled condition,—three vacancies to be filled next month, and several of those who are left suffering from old age and infirmities.

I write frankly, as you would have me, and from the fullness of my heart. But I should do injustice to the vital importance of your services as our General Agent, if I did not say that your withdrawal would be an irreparable loss. Should that loss really befall us, and your place be supplied by some pressing Northern candidate, the South would be disquieted. But your place could not be filled in the estimation of either South or North.

I fully appreciate your wife's natural disposition to

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spend a few years abroad as an Ambassadress. I am afraid I shall be out of her good graces, which would be a great grief to me, by writing as I have. But better things than Madrid may turn up for both of you one of these days. She would not like to have it said hereafter that the cause of Southern Education had been brought to a stand, and the Peabody Fund plunged into confusion, by her husband's acceptance of a Mission abroad.

Forgive my strong expressions. I write off-hand, and take no copy of my letter. Let me thank you, however, as I do sincerely, for your warm and affectionate personal expressions, which I heartily reciprocate. One of my main obligations to George Peabody is that his Trust brought me into such intimate relations with Dr. Sears and yourself. And let me not conclude without assuring you, that however you may decide this question, my own regard and affection for you and Mrs. Curry cannot be changed.

Ever sincerely,

Your friend,

ROBT. C. WINTHROP.

HON. J. L. M. CURRY, LL.D.

On the 23rd of September, Curry wrote to Mr. Winthrop:—

After a most painful conflict between dual duties, the decision has been made and the Government has been notified that the mission will be accepted. If I had been required to go abroad at once, a sense of obligation to the Peabody Fund would have precluded any consideration of the tender made, however honorable. Time is allowed for the selection of a successor, and to enable me by correspondence, or personal interviews, to acquaint him with our principles and methods of administration, and the *personnel* with whom the Fund must co-operate.

And Mr. Winthrop, while Curry was penning the letter containing this announcement, had already

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overcome his first feelings of disappointment, and under the same date was writing to him thus:—

While I cannot abate a jot or tittle of what I have heretofore said about your importance to our Trust, I feel less anxious than I did at first about our ability to carry along the Peabody work after a fashion, without serious injury to the cause, or any great strain upon myself.

After the adjournment of the Peabody Board in New York on October 6, 1883, Curry proceeded at once to Boston, to call on Mr. Lowell, who had been appointed to Madrid by President Hayes, in 1877, and transferred thence to the court of St. James in 1880.

I visited Hon. James Russell Lowell in Boston," he writes, "and lunched with him. He was courteous and kind . . . and gave me valuable suggestions, the result of his own diplomatic experience in Madrid. One remark he made surprised me. He said he had much difficulty in convincing government and the best people that an American Minister could be a gentleman.

A few years later in response to a request for his portrait Mr. Lowell writes in this strain to his successor:

DEERFOOT FARM, SOUTHBOROUGH,
11th Jan., 1887.

DEAR SIR:

Immediately after receiving your very kind letter of the 24th Nov., I gave directions that an engraved portrait of me should be sent to you through the Department of State. I hope that it will already have reached you. It is thought to be a pretty fair likeness.

I am very glad you liked my address at the Harvard Centenary. It was a very pleasant affair and everything

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went off smothly and successfully. The audience, especially that part of it on the platform, was a very remarkable one, the preponderance of gray and even white heads being remarkable. It was observed that nearly all those who had an active share in the ceremonies were much older than those who performed similar functions at the last celebration in 1836. The chief marshal of the day had been one of the marshals fifty years before, the poet was a graduate of fifty-seven years' standing, the orator of forty-eight, the President of the day of forty-eight, and so on. Is this a sign that we begin later than we used? At any rate it is encouraging for us veterans.

Matters are going on very quietly here. The Administration of President Cleveland is establishing itself in the confidence of the people and I think you may look forward to eight years' service at your post. I hope you find it agreeable. I was entirely contented there. I liked the Spaniards and continue to like them. I am sorry that I cannot ask to be remembered to Mrs. Curry, but I beg that you give my best respects to her.

Faithfully yours,

J. R. LOWELL.

Later in the month Curry went again to Washington.

"On 13th October," he continues, "I took the oath of office and received my commission, and then spent some days in the Department, reviewing correspondence, and familiarizing myself with duties and pending questions. I dined with Mr. Bayard and the Spanish Minister, Señor Valera and Mr. Foster, our late Minister to Spain, who was very kind and useful to me. Governor Porter and Mr. Adee, Assistant Secretaries of State, were guests also. Numerous congratulatory telegrams and letters were received, and the citizens of Richmond offered me a banquet."

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Among these telegrams and letters was one so out of the usual character of such messages, that it will bear insertion here.

The Rock Islander,
First Established in 1854.
J. B. DANFORTH, Editor.
ROCK ISLAND, ILLS., Oct. 8, 1885.

DEAR SIR:—

To-day, when I saw in telegrams your appointment as Minister to Spain, I remembered a letter you wrote me in January, 1860; and I took it from a file of valuables, and re-read it. I was then trying to persuade you and C. C. Clay and Gov. McRea, and I don't know how many more, not to talk about secession, for it would beat us in the fall of that year. I always admired your spirited letter. I have used it several times in speeches, to show that the South was in earnest, and that secession and war were inevitable. I never published it, and don't propose to now, for it would make Rome howl.

I am very glad to hear of you again. I was afraid you had passed from earth. I congratulate you on the appointment, for I know you will creditably represent the whole country. May you live long and prosper.

Very truly yours,
J. B. DANFORTH.

HON. J. L. M. CURRY,
RICHMOND, VA.

On November 5, 1885, after a series of social entertainments given in his honor by gentlemen of distinction and prominence in Washington and in Richmond, Curry set sail from New York, accompanied by Mrs. Curry, on the steamer "Germanic." They stopped successively in London and Paris, long enough to be entertained by the American Ministers, Messrs. Phelps and McLane; and in the

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latter city, Mrs. Curry tarried for a month; while her husband went on to Spain, and reached Madrid on the morning of the 25th of November.

The coming of the new American Minister to the scene of his latest labors was contemporaneous with the departure from earth of the Spanish King. On the morning of Curry's arrival, he was met at the railroad station by Mr. Strobel, the American Secretary of Legation, and escorted to his hotel. At 9 o'clock of the same day, his Majesty King Alfonso the Third departed this life; and with the note of this melancholy incident, Curry records in his diary the coincidence of the death that day of Thomas A. Hendricks, Vice-president of the United States.

On December 1st the new Minister had an unofficial interview with Sigismund Moret, the Spanish Minister of State, at his office in the palace. It appears that the death of the King invalidated Curry's credentials as Minister; and accordingly he was compelled to wait until others could be sent from Washington, before he might be formally presented to the Queen Regent. On the 3rd day of the month, however, he received a cablegram from his government at home, constituting him a special envoy to represent the United States at the King's funeral.

Although in his usual personal attire Curry always exhibited a marked neatness, and a due regard for the mandates of fashion in the cut and texture of his garments, he was in no sense an exquisite, or inclined to any sort of personal display. Yet some sense of incongruity seems to have taken possession of him, as it has been known to possess other Ameri-

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can representatives in European Courts upon State occasions, in being compelled to appear at any hour of the day in clothes, which ordinarily are worn in good society the world over only in the evening. In a letter written to Mr. Winthrop on December 6, he remarks, at some length, upon his embarrassment at the "conspicuous peculiarity" of having to appear in "a dress-coat" at the King's approaching funeral, when all other diplomats of similar rank with his own would be arrayed in appropriate and imposing costumes, with their insignia and decorations.

Mr. Winthrop's reply is amusing:—

I am afraid I could not have helped you much in regard to your Court costume. I was presented to Queen Victoria in 1847, in full diplomatic uniform, while Bancroft was Minister and Polk President. In 1860 I went to Court again with Mr. Dallas, in black evening dress, but with breeches or shorts, and with a civil sword and chapeau. In 1867 I went again in my old diplomatic uniform, with Mr. Adams, who insisted on wearing a uniform like that of his father and grandfather. I suppose you have some instructions on the subject. It is rather a pity that the Ministers of the United States should be compelled to dress like the waiters.

Curry has recorded at some length the details of his first reception by the Queen Regent, which took place on the 11th of December; and of the King's funeral on the day following:—

"On that day" (December 11) "at 3.30 P. M., Mr. Strobel and I repaired to the palace, and I was presented by Señor Moret, in order to convey to the Queen the sentiments of the President in reference to the death of the King, and as preparatory to taking part in the funeral ceremonies.

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"This was my first interview with Royalty, except a presentation at the Quirinal in 1876, when we had the honor at a State ball of being presented to Humbert and Christina, who afterwards became King and Queen of Italy.

"The Queen, in deep mourning, was dignified and courteous and graceful, and was evidently affected by the expressions of the little address which I made to her in behalf of my country.

"On the succeeding day occurred at the Church of St. Sebastian, with great pomp and display, the funeral of the deceased King. The house was packed. Seats were assigned to, and reserved for the diplomatic corps and the dignitaries. All the governments of Europe had authorized Special Ambassadors, who, with the Cabinet and some others, had seats of honor in the choir. Being a Special Envoy, equivalent to an Ambassador, I was honored with a seat behind the 'elect few'; and being just behind the Papal Nuncio, Cardinal Rampolla, I watched him, and was thus able to go through the various 'risings and sittings,' which were frequent, and without such experienced guidance, would have been embarrassing. The Diplomatic Corps, sat below the choir, as did various other officials and especially invited guests. All were in their gorgeous uniforms and decorations except the representatives of the United States; and we, restrained by the absurd instructions of our Government, wore the dress-suit of a head-waiter in a hotel. The Archbishop of Valladolid, Exc'mo Sr. D. Benito Sanz y Fores, preached the funeral oration; and the magnificent tenor singer, Guyarez, sang at length, and with a profound impression.

"On the same day, as diplomatic etiquette required, I had an audience, arrangements as to time having previously been made, of Infanta Isabel, sister of Alfonso, and of Isabella, the Queen Mother, who had been dethroned in 1868."

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The question of a proper court costume appears to have been for a long time before Curry's mission a more or less burning one with American Ministers abroad. When Mr. Buchanan went as Minister to St. James, Secretary of State Marcy had just issued an order that American Ministers abroad should appear at public functions in the plain and simple costume of an American citizen. The effect of this order on some of the European Courts is said to have been remarkable. The British press appears to have discussed it; and the story is told that, just before the meeting of Parliament, Mr. Buchanan received from the master of ceremonies a printed paper to the effect that no one would be admitted to the diplomatic gallery or to the body of either house who did not wear a court costume. The American Minister thereupon stayed away, although the London *Times* reported him as attending and feeling uncomfortable and conspicuous in his plain clothes. When it became necessary for him to appear at Court, however, he followed his government's instructions, adding to his "evening clothes" a plain black-hilted sword; and it is related of him that Mr. Buchanan said afterwards that he never was prouder of his country than he was as he stood there, the most simply dressed person in the room, amid the uniforms and decorations of all the Courts of Europe.

On the 22nd of December, Curry presented his credential letter to Her Majesty, and was received as the Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary of the United States. On the occasion of its presentation he delivered to the Queen a formal address, which had been prepared in advance and submitted, according to custom, to the Spanish Minister

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of State for approval; and to which the Queen made a gracious and pleasant though brief reply. Later he made calls, as the Court etiquette required, upon Sagasta, President of the Council of Ministers, and upon Moret, the Minister of State; and on the day following, he visited in succession the remaining members of the Cabinet, and his colleagues of the Diplomatic Corps, according to the custom which requires the latest comer to make the first calls.

All the ceremonial requirements of an ancient and punctilious Court were rigidly observed by the new American Minister. On New Year's Day, 1886, in company with the whole Diplomatic Corps, he paid a visit of condolence to the Queen Regent, and the Infanta Isabella; and a few days after, with Mrs. Curry, he called in a less formal way upon the same royal personages.

With a ready intelligence that foreign diplomacy carries with it in eminent degree the requirements of social obligation, Curry and his wife began soon thereafter a series of afternoon receptions, which were continued with increasing popularity during the period of their sojourn at the Spanish Court. Frequent dinners were given, in return for like civilities, and to promote international good feeling; and to these functions were invited the Diplomatic Corps, members of the government, officers of the army and navy, members of the nobility, English and American visitors, and the elite of the old Spanish families of Madrid. The good taste and charm of these entertainments soon attracted public attention; and the newspapers of the Capitol were lavish in the praise which they bestowed upon their distinction.

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"The American Legation," commented *El Resumen*, in an article which was characteristic of many others that appeared in the Spanish press of the period, "is undoubtedly one of the most hospitable in Madrid. Mr. Curry and his beautiful and distinguished wife sustain worthily in the Spanish Capital the standard of the rich and powerful American Republic. In addition to their Monday receptions, they have inaugurated a series of sumptuous banquets on Thursdays. . . .

"Mr. Curry employs his diplomatic leisure in writing a work on the Constitutions which have been used in Spain since the establishment of the Parliamentary regime."

It was a season of no small personal pleasure and enjoyment to the Currys; and of it, Curry wrote a short time before his death:—

Even now, twelve and fourteen years after, a war with bitterness and humiliating results intervening, we catch echoes of pleasant remembrances of those enjoyable events.

Of this social side of his career Curry writes to Mr. Winthrop in Boston, after a year's experience, as follows:—

MADRID, 28 Dec., 1886.

DEAR MR. WINTHROP:—

. . . In a former letter, I think I mentioned our formal or State dinners, which bring us into pleasant social intercourse with leading men and women. I do not share in his political opinions, but no statesman here has impressed me as much as Canovas. He has firmness, courage, intelligence, political experience, breadth of view and much wit. He talks at a dinner-table exceedingly well, but both he and Castelar monopolize the "talk." Canovas, speaking of Castelar's well-known and inoffensive vanity, and peacockish display, said of him, that he never saw a marriage without wishing to be the bride, nor a funeral without wishing to be the corpse.

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In addition to dinners, Mrs. Curry has receptions every Monday from 5 to 7; and these re-unions are so popular that her salons are crowded with the best and most notable people of Madrid. This winter's experience is in most pleasant contrast with the last; and has increased—decreased, rather, the discomforts of Madrid life, and much enhanced my ability and opportunities for usefulness. I beg you to believe me that my desire to benefit our country, and to show that an ex-Confederate can be entrusted with the honor and welfare of the Country, are the highest motives of action. . . .

Yours faithfully,
J. L. M. CURRY.

HON. ROBERT C. WINTHROP,
BOSTON, MASS.

During the first year of Curry's service at Madrid, an event of unusual interest occurred in the posthumous birth of the heir to the throne of the King, whose death had taken place on the day of the Minister's arrival.

"On 28 April," he writes, "I received an invitation, sent to the diplomatic corps, based on the approaching confinement of the Queen Regent, with a request to be present at 'la ceremonia de la presentacion del Rey y Infanta.'

"On the first of May I received an official notification, more formal and urgent, from the Introducer of Ambassadors, and from the 'Mayordomia de S.M. . . .' inviting me to 'assista a Palacio al acto de la presentacion del Rey y Infanta que S.M. diere a luz.' Four days afterwards Mary and I met the Queen Regent and the Infanta Eulalia driving in a low, two-seated carriage. On Monday, the 17th of May, about sunrise, a messenger from the Palace came in post haste to summon my immediate attendance. Omitting all signs of mourning, with which all officials were bedecked since the death of the King, I went to the Palace

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and found some of the diplomatic corps (others came later) and government officials, in full uniform, with cocked hats, swords, gold bands, and all the decorations to which they were entitled. The Cabinet, officially arrayed, and a number of distinguished officers and civilians were there, or arrived afterwards.

"We waited half or three-quarters of an hour, when the Cabinet was called. Soon the President, Señor Sagasta, returned, and standing at the door, proclaimed in Spanish, 'Long live the King!' This announced the birth and sex of him, who, so far as I know, was the first human being ever born a King.

"Passing at once through a suite of rooms, we were halted next to the chamber of the Queen. Arranging ourselves in a semicircle, and waiting for what might occur, a lady, one of the Queen's waiting-women, came out, holding in her hands a beautiful silver basket, or waiter. In this, enveloped in soft cotton, was the new-born babe, His Royal Highness, Prince of Asturias, King of Spain. The babe was passed around, *in puris naturalibus*, for our inspection; but I did not see the divinity which hedges in a King. He soon proved his common humanity by crying, and was withdrawn to be clothed. This ceremony, once so common, to prevent imposition of false heirs, is peculiar to Spain; and I am one of the few now living who 'assisted' at such a function. The birth was soon made known by firing of cannon, ringing of bells, and noisy, tumultuous demonstrations on the streets. . . .

"On the 22nd the baptism of the babe was performed in the royal chapel in the Palace, and was a splendid ceremonial. Invitations were sent us; and they prescribed the dress for both men and women. The rigor of the rule about mourning had been relaxed since the advent of the royal monarch, and the eagerness of the ladies, even the sisters of the late King, to throw aside the sombre black, showed that mourning for a conventional time was irksome and tended to degenerate into mere formalities.

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"Just before one o'clock, we drove to the Palace. The square and surrounding streets were thronged with eager and curious people. We entered by the grand staircase, one of the most magnificent in Europe, which was lined by officers and soldiers richly dressed. A spacious corridor surrounds and overlooks the interior court or plaza. This was decorated with abundant and beautiful tapestry, while the floor was richly carpeted. To reach the chapel it was necessary to make the circuit of full half of the corridor. The whole distance was lined with people, four or five rows in depth; but the Civil Guard kept an open avenue, wide enough for the gorgeously dressed favored few, who had access to the chapel.

"While marching through the avenue, the Introducer of Ambassadors met us, and offering his arm to Mrs. Curry, conducted her to the tribune which had been erected and upholstered in the chapel for the diplomatic corps. It was with much personal and national pride that an American saw the female representative of his country encountering with such calmness the battery of a thousand eyes; for, as her train swept gracefully behind, she was the cynosure of universal admiration, and elicited a thousand compliments. She wore a white satin dress, a point lace overdress looped with feathers, a white satin train lined with green velvet, and trimmed with sable, a point-lace mantilla, white feathers, a diamond aigrette, emeralds in hair and a diamond brooch in front.

"The royal chapel, not very large, was fitted up with splendor; and places were so assigned as to prevent uncomfortable pressure. Men and women, titled and untitled, were arrayed in silks and satins, in silver and gold and gems and jewels. The clergy were much *en evidence*, and all departments of the Government had their chosen representatives. The magnificence was unparalleled. The royal babe, gorgeously dressed, preceded by civil and ecclesiastical dignitaries, was brought in by Infanta Isabel, aided or attended by the Papal Nuncio, Cardinal Ram-

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polla, and the first lady of the Court. The little fellow screamed lustily, showing his protest against such fuss and folly. The 'baptism,' I suppose, was after the usual ceremony of the Church of Rome, emphasized and prolonged for the occasion, and the exceptional 'subject.' The Pope, through the Nuncio, stood sponsor, or godfather; and the whole function consumed an hour and a half.

". . . The King was christened Alfonso Leon Fernando Santiago Maria Isidro Pascual y Anton."

Curry's principal diplomatic efforts at the Spanish Court were in the direction of negotiating a commercial treaty which should free the commerce between America and Spain from some of its traditional restrictions. Of these efforts and their results he wrote to Mr. Winthrop, in July, 1886:—

The same assumption that you are more than interested in us as representatives of the United States will justify me in saying that I have had extraordinary, certainly unusual, success in my diplomatic negotiations. Two serious questions I fell heir to. One of them has perplexed and irritated both countries for more than fifty years. Spain has very naturally sought to control the trade of her Antillean dependencies. Our nearness to the islands, and the market we gave to their products, made us successful competitors. Hence grew up a war of tariffs. An agreement of Feb., 1884, intended by Mr. Foster to remove discriminations, failed of its object; as the two governments put a contrary interpretation upon certain words of the instrument. Mr. Frelinghuysen and Mr. Bayard gave very emphatic instructions. I have succeeded in getting a Royal Order removing the differential flag duty, and conforming to the American construction.

As far back as 1876 Mr. Cushing entered an earnest protest against some consular fees on tonnage collected in American ports. The different Secretaries of State have

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issued minatory instructions, and all my predecessors have wasted much breath, time and paper in a vain effort to get a correction of the abuse. Fortunately, by incessant exertions, demanding all the tact, patience and ability I was master of, I have succeeded in getting a suppression of what was so obnoxious to my Government.

These Spaniards are strange people. When you enter a house for the first time, everything is placed at your disposition, but the polite compliment means nothing. The like offer of everything is carried into diplomacy, and is equally meaningless. Patience represents an act or quality of looking for justice, or an expected good, without murmuring or fretfulness; and that virtue is likely to have her perfect work in dealing with high officials, between whose premises and performances there is an impassable gulf, or the width of weary months and years.

In a later memorandum Curry writes of his labors in behalf of a commercial treaty which should be unambiguous in its terms and just to his government:—

For years by my predecessors and myself, the matter was pressed; but nothing more favorable and decisive could I accomplish than some slight modifications of consular usages and a larger *modus vivendi*, which remained in force until our late unfortunate war.

But there were other matters of importance besides the commercial treaty which demanded his attention and engaged his efforts; and his account of some of them serves to show that his representation of the United States as their Minister did not mean that his time and attention were devoted only to the social side of his mission.

"Another matter I inherited," he writes, "which gave annoyance and trouble. For many years the Legation was

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burdened with Cuban claims; and the claimants, personally, through attorneys, and through instructions from the State Department, were urgent and insistent in demanding payment for enormous alleged injuries and losses.

"Instead of making a drag-net of claims of varied worth and proof, my accomplished Secretary, E. H. Strobel, and myself, after thorough consideration, decided to select one, apparently the best sustained, and make a test of it, with the hope that an agreement to pay one would settle the principle and establish a precedent for payingothers. After scores of interviews, annoying delays, wearing patience threadbare, I succeeded in getting an agreement to pay the claim of Mora for $1,500,000. This agreement bound the Government, committed the members of the Cabinet, —but aroused active opposition in the Cortes, threatened the existence of the Government, and drew down on Moret vile slanders. I wish just here parenthetically to affirm my perfect faith in Moret's integrity and absolute freedom from word or act affecting in remotest degree the purity of his official life, or his fidelity to the interests and honor of Spain. The claim was delayed in payment for some years; and Spain, in her impecunious condition, finally yielded to heavy pressure brought to bear on her by the United States Government. Various pretences have been put forth, arrogating credit for the success of the Mora claim; but the decisive and binding agreement to pay was made with me as the United States representative."

Curry's personal charm and attractiveness, and his varied official duties and social opportunities at Madrid, made for him many friends and acquaintances there. Among them were different members of the royal family, and a number of the prominent politicians and statesmen of the time and country. The roll of their names is notable and significant,

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and includes Sigismund Moret, Sagasta, Castelar, Canovas and Salmeron; and on it also are inscribed those of the Archduchess of Austria, the Duke of Montpensier, the Comte de Paris, and many others of noble birth and distinguished rank.

"Sigismund Moret," writes Curry, in 1901, "was the Minister of State, with whom I had all my official intercourse. Physically and intellectually he is a superb man. With enlightened views, varied experience, unusual ability, unquestioned patriotism, unfailing suavity and courtesy of manner, it was a pleasure to deal with him; and our relations were most cordial. In politics, he is a Liberal, such as one would class with Asquith, Morley and Bannerman in England. . . . During the Spanish-American War he was Secretary for the Colonies, and would have favored large concessions to Cuba. In May, 1888, he said Cuba should be Americanized. If in the course of years it desired independence, such was the course of life. To give up Cuba then would be the overthrow of the monarchy; and in these utterances his chief, Sagasta, agreed. I am sure that to have allowed Cuba to hold the relation to Spain, that Canada does to England, would not have been objectionable. The insular American possessions, being the last of Spain's continental dominion, were regarded with special pride, and the sensitiveness of the people could not brook such a loss."

Of Moret, Curry writes further, elsewhere:—

My cordial and pleasant official relations with, and warm personal friendship for Señor Moret, and his desire to accommodate the diplomatic corps, and to finish the work in his department, did not cure him of the incurable Spanish habit of not doing to-day what can be deferred until to-morrow. As in the East the first and last word a traveller hears is *backsheesh*, so in Spain the first and last word is *manaña*. My diary shows numerous interviews

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with the Secretary; as many unkept appointments; and when conferences were held, final issues were not reached, generally because of this national habit. The experience of my colleagues was the same as mine.

The traditional and distinguishing Spanish characteristic of putting off till to-morrow everything possible which might be done to-day is dwelt upon by Curry in many of his letters from Madrid, and in his other Spanish *memorabilia;* and it is worthy of remark that he should have accomplished so much in a diplomatic way in the teeth of such unfavorable conditions. But he was a diplomat by nature and cultivation, though with no lack of frankness and candor in all his diplomatic life. His long habitude of dealing with men had cultivated in him the patience and perseverance and sweet serenity of temper which were parts of his original nature; and, through this happy union of natural and acquired qualities, he was enabled, as a foreign minister, to merit the high praise bestowed upon him by his chief, Secretary Bayard, who, before his experience at Madrid was a year old, wrote to him in a private letter:—

It is not invidious to say you have accomplished more in your single year than your predecessors in twenty years.

During his stay at Madrid, Curry kept up a regular correspondence with his son, Manly, who then resided at St. Paul; and his letters, thus written, without reserve, possess much of the charm that spontaneity must give to all letter-writing.

"I make it a rule," he said in one of these epistles, "to send you at least one letter a week. Sometimes, as I usually write a little every day, I do more."

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Many of these weekly letters were lost or destroyed; but those that remain contain much that is of interest. In one of them the writer gives a vivid and pleasing picture of the Spanish Congress, and of some of its leading figures.

The last two afternoons I have attended the sessions of Congress, which is a National Debating Society. For some weeks the body has been engaged in verifying their credentials, and discussing the speech from the Throne, which is a sort of Ministerial or Governmental platform. The room,—or the seats, rather,—are semi-circular. A part of the front row is occupied by the Ministers, who are provided with desks. Under every seat is a drawer, and a little writing-shelf can be raised. I have seen no one reading a newspaper, or a book, except for reference. I counted over fifty bald heads. Very meagre notes are used. I have seen no manuscripts. As with us and the House of Commons, and unlike the Assembly in France, every member speaks from his seat. Spaniards are garrulous and voluble, and their speeches are generally long; but there is no scrambling over the "floor" as with us. In Washington a hundred voices will scream out "Mr. Speaker!" Here, one very quietly is recognized; and there is evidently a pre-arrangement as to who shall speak, and a preference given to Ministers.

The Chair seems to have much power. He uses a larger bell as a gavel, and a smaller bell to summon some one to do his bidding. There are no pages; and generally the body is very orderly. One day I heard Lopez Dominguez, the leader of the "Dynastic Left," and a reply by the Minister of Grace and Justice. Yesterday I heard Salmeron, the leader of the small band of Republicans, and a reply by my friend, Moret. Salmeron is an able man,—speaks well and deliberately, with self-control. He assailed Monarchy, and his speech commanded attention and excited contentions. When he finished, some of his band hugged

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and kissed him. Moret speaks distinctly, gracefully, rapidly, eloquently. He elicited much applause from his Liberal supporters, and even from Conservatives. . . .

Yesterday P. M. Mary accompanied me to Congress, and we heard Castelar, the distinguished Republican, of whom I wrote some time ago. Enthusiasts (see March *Century*, 1886) write of him as the Orator of Humanity,—as the peculiar, unparalleled product of Spanish environment. I was disappointed. He is full of poetry, imagination, fervor. He has read widely, and his language is full, chaste, appropriate. He is the most impassioned speaker I ever heard,—rants excessively, gesticulates vehemently and ludicrously. The pantomime—and it was not much more to me in my unfamiliarity with the language, and my bad position for hearing—was not effective. His voice was not distinct nor musical, probably the result of hoarseness, and the use of too much fluid. (*Do* not misunderstand me: he is very temperate; does not smoke nor even drink wine, and that in Spain is something unique.) I was not moved. I have heard men in a foreign tongue, who, by voice or acting, stirred me. Castelar did not. He is not to be compared to Yancey. Who is? . . .

Curry's judgment of Castelar was not that of his contemporaries; nor is it likely to be that of posterity. Of all the Europeans of his day, no orator has left a more pronounced reputation for unusual and gifted eloquence than the Spaniard, Emilio Castelar. "Athens," say his countrymen, "had its Demosthenes, Rome its Cicero; and we have our Castelar"; and if the majestic company in which they place him may seem to the casual reader an exaggeration of his powers, he undoubtedly wielded the stirring oratory that of right belongs always to the history of the minority, as the most

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thrilling poetry belongs to the story of the conquered.

Mr. Adee, whom Curry has mentioned as the Assistant Secretary of State of the United States at the time of his appointment to Madrid, and who was *chargé d'affaires* at Madrid fifteen years before Curry was made Minister, has written of Castelar:—

> I saw him make his famous speech on the bill for Cuban emancipation. Madrid was agog for weeks beforehand. It was announced that Castelar was to make the grandest effort of his life. Tickets for the galleries were eagerly sought. Every deputy was in his seat, every nook was filled. The initial proceedings interested no one. A Spaniard said to me: "All Madrid has come to a Castelar matinee."
>
> "Of the character of his oratory," continues Mr. Adee, "it is not easy to speak. His discourses do not bear close analysis. Canovas, Alonza Martinez, Sagasta, Martos, and many others are his masters in debate. In fact Castelar is not a good debater. Set speeches are his peculiar province. I have heard it said that they are written and committed to memory. Taken unawares by a shrewd logician, whom florid generalities will not silence, he does not show to advantage."

Yet after all, real oratory is not of the logician. The fervid passion of O'Connell, the stirring speech of Thomas Francis Meagher, the sonorous and splendid diction of John Mitchel, all illustrate how far apart are the cold, calm, clear cut logic of the scientist, the reasoner, the casuist, and the emotional eloquence of that indescribable oratory which stirs and thrills the hearts and souls of those who hear it.

Curry himself appears to have modified his opinion of Castelar; for two years later he wrote:—

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He and Moret were the best speakers in the Cortes. One speech of Castelar's which I had the pleasure of hearing was a wonderful triumph of oratory. For fifteen minutes after he closed, the hurrahs and *vivas* were kept up tumultuously; and Sagasta, the Prime Minister, crossed the Chamber and embraced him.

Of other Spanish statesmen of the day Curry wrote interestingly to his son:—

We also heard for an hour Canovas, the head of the late ministry. He is probably the ablest man in Spain; is not an orator, but spoke well. The Republican leader, Salmeron, having characterized him as a "modern Torquemeda," the reply was sarcastic and severe. Canovas is the most interesting dinner-companion I have met in Spain.

Of Canovas, Curry at a later date wrote to his son:—

"Canovas, the leader of the Conservatives, lately sent me a good photograph, with his autograph. A good saying is attributed to him in reference to Castelar's well-known vanity, and peacockish display."

And he repeats the story which he had written to Mr. Winthrop about "the bridegroom" and "the corpse."

During the hot season, when "Castilian Days" at their best were almost unendurable, Curry and his wife fled to the mountains, or to the seashore, as the impulse moved them. From Biarritz, beloved of American tourists, he wrote his son, Manly, a letter in September, 1886, which is full of interest, as illustrating the attitude of his mind toward the morality of the day. His view of art may seem uncosmopolitan, but it may at least be conceded to have been sincere; and if Matthew Arnold's stigmatism of Henry Ward Beecher as "a heated bar-

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barian," was in any sense just, it may be said of Curry, a typical American of his time, that if in the estimate of cultured Europeans he was "barbarian"—of the "hoi barbaroi" in the real Greek sense—he was at least not a "heated" one.

"You know," he writes to his son, Manly, after attending a grand opera at Biarritz, "I am no judge of music; and so I omit any expression of opinion; but the scenery was elaborate and beautiful, the tableaus like fairy works; and the dancing sylph-like and graceful. I am, however, such an 'old fogy,' as not to approve so much nudity and such studied exposure of person. After much observation and reflection, while relaxing my rigid notions in some particulars, I am forced to conclude that the nudity in pictures and statues, the suggestive half-concealments and half-exposures, in art, in dances, in much fashionable dressing, have a very deleterious influence on personal purity and national morals. The reply is quick, I know, 'To the pure all things are pure,' and '*Honi soit qui mal y pense*' as the motto of the Knights of the Garter phrases it; but man is a poor, frail fallible creature, with strong appetites and passions, with dominant tendencies to evil; and the history of Spain, France, Italy, Austria, Greece and old Rome, shows a depravation of morals, and an amount of conjugal infidelity and personal impurity that, so far, England and the United States are comparatively free from. When I see the American youth of both sexes, who were trained in pure religious homes, standing for hours before the inimitable productions of Titian's pencil, or ancient sculptors, or seeing the exhibitions on the stage, I shudder, because I know that an impure thought cherished, wicked passion conceived, is a heritage of misery, and a source of corruption. My objections will be hooted at; but sneers and ridicule are not arguments, and do not reverse the unchangeable records of history."

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Another letter to his son suggests memories of an illustrious Virginia scholar and historian, whose learning has preserved the names of many of the earlier Virginians,—the Honorable Hugh Blair Grigsby.

"I have just finished my letter to dear Mr. Winthrop," he writes to Manly Curry on July 4th, 1886.

"He and Mr. Grigsby had a habit of writing to each other every Fourth; and when Grigsby died, I fell heir to the privilege. Virginia and Massachusetts should lock hands every Fourth. My foreign residence and representative character intensify my patriotism. A contrast betwixt people and institutions in the United States makes me more and more in love with America and our representative free governments."

The roster of Curry's correspondents, as illustrated in his letter-books of the period, constitutes a shining bede-roll, the simple mention of whose names must cause regret that the limits of this volume do not admit the publication of their letters. Among them, after Mr. Winthrop's, are those of Secretary Bayard, General Armstrong of the Hampton School, Señor Moret, Dr. John A. Broadus, President Cleveland, General Joseph E. Johnston, Assistant Secretary Adee, Hon. John W. Foster, Alexander Brown the Virginia historian, James Russell Lowell, E. J. Phelps, Francis Wharton, Señor Sagasta, Señor Castelar, Dr. Josiah Strong, Señor Salmerón, Gen. Sickles, William Wirt Henry, William A. Courtenay, Sir Philip H. W. Currie, Richmond Pearson, and others scarcely less well known.

Of Mr. Winthrop his admiration was ever increasing, and not infrequently expressed. In August, 1886, he wrote to his son, Manly, "Mr. Winthrop has sent me another volume of his speeches. His

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intellectual and beneficent activity shames me. He might plead the infirmities of age, and point proudly to the work achieved; but he practically says reprovingly to the less laborious and useful young, 'I must be about my Father's business';" and in the following November he writes to Winthrop himself, with the unreserved frankness of affection:—

> We felt sure your thoughtful kindness would not forget your far-away friends, and we were not disappointed; for in good time came the printed address of yourself and the Report of Dr. Green, and then one of your unapproachable letters. The letters of Byron, Gray, Walpole, Lady Mary Montagu, have worldwide celebrity; but a judicious collection of yours would take the highest rank in the Literature of Letters.

The industry and intellectual activity which Curry praised in Winthrop were never wanting in his own case. His energetic diplomacy at Madrid still left him the time, which the busiest man always finds, for yet other business; and during his occupation of the Spanish mission he made a study of the Spanish constitutions, the result of which he compressed into a volume of three hundred pages under the title, "Constitutional Government in Spain." This book was published in 1889 by the Harpers. From the Spanish records, too, he prepared and contributed to the *Magazine of American History* a paper on "The Acquisition of Florida"; and he wrote an introduction for Dr. Armitage's "History of the Baptists." It was with the pride and pleasure that spring from old associations that he saw at this time his public and literary distinction recognized and acknowledged by the University of Georgia, the home of his first intellectual triumphs. On the

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13th of July, 1887, the Chancellor of the University wrote to him as follows:—

I have the honor and the pleasure to inform you that the Trustees of the University of Georgia have this day conferred upon you the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws. Your Alma Mater hopes that her gifted and distinguished son will accept this deserved honor at her hands.

The Currys had spent the summer of 1886 in Southern France; and the next summer had returned to the United States for a visit. The summer of 1888 saw their career in Spain drawing to a close. The earlier months of the season were passed in travelling in Austria, Italy and Switzerland; and in August, Curry sent to Washington the resignation of his commission of Minister to Spain. It was "accepted with regret"; and in September he sailed from Havre for America, leaving Mrs. Curry in Paris for a stay of a month or two longer. On the 26th of September, 1888, he called on Mr. Bayard, the Secretary of State, and upon the day following on President Cleveland.

Two days later he "closed up his accounts," as he phrases it, at the State Department.

The verdict of the administration which he had served was rendered in the following letters from the Secretary of State and from the President:—

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
WASHINGTON, October 27, 1888.

J. L. M. CURRY, ESQ.,
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA.

SIR:—When I received your dispatch of August 6th last, tendering your resignation of the office of Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of the United

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States to Spain, to take effect on September 5th last, you informed me that you were then upon the eve of departing from Madrid for Switzerland, under your leave of absence, and requested a short reply by telegraph, addressed to you at Geneva; and signified your willingness to receive a more formal reply after you should have returned to the United States.

In consonance with your wishes, I telegraphed you the President's reluctant acceptance of your resignation, and the regret I felt in communicating it.

It is not alone that I feel a personal loss in your withdrawal from a service in the Department of which I am the head, but the country at large is a loser by your retirement.

The confidence felt in your ability and patriotism, which caused your selection for an important diplomatic position, has been fully justified by your performance of its duties.

The impairment of your health by the unfavorable climate of Madrid, to which alone I must attribute your resignation, I trust will be speedily restored in your native land; and with sincere thanks for your honorable and efficient service to the country, I am sincerely and most truly yours,

T. F. BAYARD.

EXECUTIVE MANSION,
WASHINGTON, NOV. 2, 1888.

HON. J. L. M. CURRY.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I shall not feel satisfied until I say to you more fully than I have already done, that it is with the utmost regret that I permit you to sever your relation to our Diplomatic Service. Your representation of the Government at the Court of Spain has been so satisfactory in all respects, that I should be constrained to ask you to reconsider your determination to vacate your official post, if it was based

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upon anything less personal and important than your health.

I hope that the resumption of your former duties at home will be attended by great satisfaction to yourself and great progress in the cause of education, which you have had for so many years sincerely at heart.

Yours very truly,

GROVER CLEVELAND.

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CHAPTER XVII

THE PEABODY FUND AGAIN

President Cleveland's felicitation of Curry upon his educational work was a fair expression of the thought of many friends of education in America, and especially in the States of the South. As long as a year before his final resignation of the mission to Spain Curry had expressed to Mr. Winthrop his desire to take up the General Agency of the Peabody Fund again; and the venerable president of the Peabody Board had hailed the prospect with delight.

Madrid, 28 April, 1887.

Dear Mr. Winthrop:

. . . And now for a suggestion; which I have not discussed with Mrs. Curry, between whom and myself there are never any reserves in matters relating to personal duties and interests.

My mission here has been a success; but for a year or two I see little to be done beyond routine work and a "masterly inactivity" in watching the progress of events, so as to allow the Republic to suffer no detriment. While my health is perfectly restored, it has been accomplished by flying from Madrid in winter and early spring months. The climate here is treacherous and dangerous; and I have been seriously debating in my mind, whether the remaining years of my life should not be given to my country, within the limits and on the soil of that country. It therefore has occurred to me to mention to you, and

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only to you, whether, if in the coming Peabody year an Agent is to be appointed, I might not say, that as at present advised, I would not be unwilling to consider, with favorable prepossessions, a proposition to resume my former connection with the Fund.

I mention this that you may think of it, and that we may talk it over, knowing that you will honor me with your usual frankness and wisdom, having reference to myself personally and the interests of the work.

Mrs. Curry, as I wrote to you on the 4th inst., will sail from Liverpool on the "Adriatic" the 25th of May, in company with Dr. Field, and I have written to engage my passage on the "Etruria" for the 6th of August.

Yours sincerely,

J. L. M. Curry.

The Hon. Robt. C. Winthrop,
Boston, Mass.

To this letter Mr. Winthrop had replied:—

Brookline, Mass.
24 May, 1887.

Dear Mr. Curry:

. . . He (Dr. Green) concurs with me heartily in the desire to reinstate you in the General Agency, and then to leave you to find a Chancellor for the Nashville Normal,—holding the place yourself until you have found the right man. Of course the Trustees must ratify such a proceeding, but there cannot be a doubt of their entire readiness and eagerness to do so; and I hope we may consider the matter settled. I had begun to be very uneasy about the future of our Board. Many things had concurred to make me anxious. I will not go into details. I can now see the way clear. With the arrangement once more in your hands, I should be ready to sing a *Nunc Dimittis*, and to depart in peace . . . Every-

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body, South and North, has confidence in you for this great Education Trust. You will have heard from Gov. Porter on the subject. Dr. Lindsley and Mr. Jones have written to me and to him, earnestly calling for you. The newspapers have begun to discuss it. I will not say more to-day, but I hope and trust that you will come over in August with a full willingness and purpose to resume the General Agency, and to carry the Trust through to its limited end. I wish you were embarking to-morrow with Mrs. Curry, so that there would be more time for arrangement before our Annual Meeting. . . .

Yours sincerely,

ROBT. C. WINTHROP.

H. E.

J. L. M. CURRY.

Curry returned in August; and they "talked it over" in all of its details. During this visit home the dissensions and troubles, which had temporarily arisen between the Tennessee State Board of Education and the Peabody Board over the Normal College at Nashville, were adjusted; and Dr. Payne, through Curry's instrumentality, was made the President of the College. So that Curry's return to his post at Madrid was with the assurance that when his diplomatic labors should end, he could take up again, where he had left it off, the work in which his heart was more warmly enlisted than it had ever been in any other.

In the following May, he wrote to Mr. Winthrop from Madrid:—

We are making our arrangements for returning in August. I feel a strong desire to get back to the work I love so much, and to have a nearer association with you. If I can, as General Agent, act on the lines you approve

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for cultivating a larger and intenser patriotism, and for keeping up a constant pressure in the direction of instructed public opinion, I shall be happy. To write a history of the Trust is also a cherished desire; but I wish to execute it thoroughly and conscientiously, so as to give satisfaction to the Trustees, do justice to Mr. Peabody, and stimulate a healthier public sentiment.

In less than three weeks after his return home from Spain, he was again at work as General Agent of the Peabody Fund.

The meeting, which welcomed Curry back to his old work, was held, according to custom, at the Fifth Avenue Hotel in New York; Mr. Winthrop inducted him into his old work in these gracious words:—

"*Gentlemen of the Peabody Board of Trustees:*

"It is a matter of special satisfaction and gratification to me this morning that I am privileged to welcome the reappearance among us of our friend, Dr. Curry, and to announce to you that after three years of valuable service as the Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States at the Court of Madrid, he has resigned that office, and has returned home to resume his labors in the great cause of education, as the General Agent of the Peabody Trust.

"The business of our Board, as you know, since Dr. Curry withdrew from our service in October, 1885, has been conducted by our faithful and untiring Secretary, Dr. Green, as General Agent, *pro tempore;* and to him our most grateful acknowledgments are due for his devoted and efficient labors,—voluntarily assumed and performed as labors of love, and thus saving no inconsiderable amount of our restricted income for appropriation to the Southern Schools. Dr. Green has, however, come to the conclusion with me that for the entire success of our work there is now a positive need of committing our General Agency anew to an accomplished Southern man of large

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personal experience in educational matters in the Southern States, and of special gifts for communicating the results of that experience to his fellow-workers in the same field,—such a man as Dr. Curry abundantly proved himself to be during the four years of his previous service. With the full understanding, therefore, of what was hoped and expected, authority was given to me at our last meeting to appoint a General Agent, under the advice of the Executive Committee, whenever I should think it best to do so. Under that authority, Dr. Curry has been appointed, and has accepted the appointment. With him once more at the helm, I feel assured that we shall hold on our track successfully to the end. . . ." (*Peabody Proceedings*, Vol. IV, pp. 3, 4.)

The note of satisfaction in the President's brief address, at getting their General Agent again "in the traces," was echoed in the public and private expressions that accompanied his restoration. Notably among these was a letter from the Rev. John A. Broadus.

LOUISVILLE, Oct. 11, 1888.

DEAR BROTHER CURRY:

I am glad to think of you as at home in our own country again, and again wielding all the educational influence you must have as manager of the Peabody Fund. I think our Southern countrymen have gone just far enough in respect of popular education to be in pressing and urgent need of going further. There is no man living who can exert so wide and wholesome an influence among them as you can do, in the position you hold, and with all your eloquence, wisdom and personal prestige. Pardon me. I should not know how to use words of compliment to you. I am only speaking of facts.

I notice the suggestion, that you may make Washington your home, and think of that idea also with pleasure; al-

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though, as a Virginian, I should sympathize with the Richmond folks in losing your residence. Washington would give certain advantages for making your educational work. It would bring you into free association with the administration and the legislators, who might in numerous ways profit by your wisdom and experience as a statesman. And you could do no little good there as a Baptist. I preached four Sundays at the Calvary Church the past summer, and got the conception that Washington Baptists have decided possibilities of development. . . .

Your Friend and Brother,

JOHN A. BROADUS.

HON. J. L. M. CURRY.

Of his second period of service under the Peabody Board, and indeed of his general relations to that Trust, and to that of the Slater Fund, Curry has left among his papers some notes that are of interest and value, and that have hitherto remained unpublished.

Scrupulously, in the discharge of my duties, as General Manager of the Peabody and the Slater Funds, I have not permitted any political or sectional or denominational considerations to enter into, or influence, in the slightest degree, my action. With State Superintendents, whether Republican or Democratic, my relations have been cordial. Official intercourse has ripened into personal friendship; and Mason and Dixon's line, as I wrote to an applicant for appointment as conductor of an institute, did not now run through political geography, and with my consent should never run through Grammar and Arithmetic. . . . When Dr. Stearns, the first President (of the Peabody Normal College) died, Mr. Winthrop put it upon me to find and to recommend to the Trustees a proper successor. The choice fell on Dr. William H. Payne of Michigan, and the Trustees sanctioned by an election the recommen-

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dation. . . . As indicative of the Catholic policy of the Trustees, and of my spirit and aim, I may say that when submitting the proposition to Dr. Payne to become the President, I enjoined him not to let me know what were his political or denominational preferences.

One college, to which State scholarships were assigned, was not considered adequate to the needs; and State Normal Schools were soon organized after my earnest advocacy and promise of aid from the Fund. For the further advancement of the qualification of teachers, summer schools were encouraged and aided. A few public schools in the several States were aided under conditions of free tuition, a local tax and nine months' session. From the organization of the Trust, a rule now generally known as the Peabody rule, and frequently adopted, has been rigorously applied, of helping those who help themselves. This largely increases the gifts to schools and secures local vigilance and increased interest in education. In my ministry of education, travelling from Potomac to Rio Grande, inspecting schools and colleges, stimulating hope and courage and progress, I have made hundreds of educational speeches, and addressed, some times several times, every Southern legislature. These addresses have been widely circulated, and they and my Annual Reports, now contained in four volumes, are, in connection with the invaluable volumes of the Bureau of Education, probably the most complete history of education in the Southern States. . . .

As frequent inquiries are made of me as to the mode of selecting schools for Peabody aid, the amount given, and the transmission of the money, it may be as well to say that *all* power in the management of the Fund is reposed in the hands of the Trustees, who meet annually to receive and pass upon the report of the Treasurer and General Agent, and to transact such other business as to them may seem necessary. Very large discretion is given to the General Agent in deciding upon the disbursement of the annual

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income which, in the autumn, he is notified will be available, at different periods in the coming year, for school purposes. Taking that amount as the basis of action, the General Agent makes a schedule of appropriations covering the entire amount. From time to time, according to what may be available in different months, a requisition, specifying schools, is submitted to the Executive and the Finance Committees. When they approve, as in no instance they have failed to do, the requisition is sent to the Treasurer, . . . and he promptly notifies me that the amount asked for has been placed in the bank to my credit. Checks are drawn on the bank for sums approved in favor of the President of the Normal College, or of the State Superintendents of Education. This confinement to Superintendents is because the Peabody Fund is given only in aid of institutions entirely, or in part controlled by the States. For these checks duplicate receipts are returned, one of which is retained, and the other accompanies my annual account as a voucher for auditing.

Curry carried his resolution to avoid political partisanry so far, that in the Presidential campaign of 1888, in which Mr. Cleveland was again nominated for the presidency of the Republic, although often urged to go upon the hustings, he refrained save in the single instance of making a campaign speech a day or two before the election to his friends and neighbors in Richmond. Yet there is no doubt that the politics of the period interested him tremendously. He had written to the President in December, 1887, with reference to the Annual Message to Congress:—

"You have drawn the attention of the country from 'the bloody shirt,' from sectional passion and hate, to practical measures, to fundamental principles;" and in the same letter he spoke of the

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message in terms which evinced the unabated fires of his earlier democracy. After stating that until the day previous to the date of his letter, when the New York papers had brought the full text of the message, of which he had only seen an abstract in the London *Times*, he continues:—

> The completed paper confirms the opinion derived from the summary. It is clear, courageous, statesmanlike. Judged from this point of view, I would not change a word. It has the ring of the good old democratic days of the Republic. It reminds me of the utterances of Polk, Wright and Woodbury. I should like to make a hundred speeches in the Presidential campaign with that message as a platform.

The message discussed the great question of Federal Taxation from the standpoint of a tariff for revenue; and it became in reality, the platform of Mr. Cleveland's party in the ensuing presidential election, when that issue became "paramount." Immediately upon Curry's landing in New York, he had been solicited by the democratic campaign managers to enter the canvass; and it may well be imagined that the old spirit of the political debater stirred him deeply. But he had made up his mind to return to what Mr. Winthrop habitually spoke of as "The Great Cause"—the work of the Peabody Fund; and his wise conception of the duty which he owed that work forbade his entrance upon the field of partisan political debate. He stuck to the text which he had laid down for his guidance as Peabody Agent, with a persistence which did not gainsay any political conviction, while it vindicated the sanity of his judgment.

The ill-health, which had apparently been first

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engendered in Spain, returned to Curry at various times in 1889 and 1890, and interfered seriously with his work; so that from this time on to the end of his busy career, he was a sufferer. It was probably one of these acute attacks which elicited from Mr. Winthrop in January, 1890, the sentiment:—

> I wish we had an insurance on your life,—not one from any earthly office, but from the Great Disposer,—so that I might be assured that you would have the final executorship of the Trust. What may happen to me is of little moment.

Although Curry, as above stated, made it his habit to eschew the activities of party politics, after associating himself with the Peabody Trust, he nevertheless did not hesitate to grapple boldly with any question of education, without regard to its creation of partisan feeling. This is strikingly illustrated in his relation to what is generally known in the political history of the period as "The Blair Bill."

During the session of Congress which met December 3, 1883, the Republican Senate passed the Blair Education Bill, the purpose of which was to give from the Federal Treasury certain sums of money for the promotion of education in various States, the distribution to be made according to the percentages of illiteracy in the populations. It was defeated in the Democratic House of Representatives, of which Mr. Carlisle was then the Speaker. In 1888 it again passed the Senate by a diminished majority, and was again defeated in the House. But Democrats and Republicans were alike divided on the measure; and Curry, though never recanting his adherence to the Calhoun theories of constitutional construction,

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espoused the cause of the Blair Bill with enthusiasm. In the fall of 1889 he published widely in the newspapers appeals for National Aid to Education. These were preliminary to a pamphlet which he later addressed to Congress. Mr. Winthrop approved of the preparation of this pamphlet, although it does not appear that he knew of its exact language. In it Curry referred to his connection with the Peabody Fund. The effect of the pamphlet on the Peabody Board was to cause one of its most distinguished members to threaten resignation. As soon as Curry caught the wind, he was also ready to resign as General Agent; and Mr. Winthrop seems to have been in great distress. The "prominent member" objected, in a personal letter to the President of the Board, to the pamphlet, which was addressed as "An Appeal to Southern Representatives in Congress and to the Friends of Free Schools in the South," on the grounds, first, of the "sectional" reference; second, because Curry referred to himself in the circular as General Agent of the Peabody Fund. Winthrop prevented the threatened resignation by showing this recalcitrant member that the Board had years before, on the initiative of the Hon. Alex. H. H. Stuart of Virginia, put themselves on record as favoring "National Aid," and that Curry's action had been that of an individual rather than in his representative capacity. The trouble was healed; and Mr. Winthrop wrote of its conclusion to Curry: "*Deus dat his quoque finem!*"

But Winthrop himself had been as eager for the passage of the Blair Bill as had been Curry; and its defeat once more, in March, 1890, elicited from him the following letter:—

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BOSTON, MASS.,
21 March, 1890.

DEAR DR. CURRY:

This morning's papers have just announced to me the defeat of the Blair Bill. It is no surprise to me. I have long felt that the measure was doomed. I do not envy those who have killed it. Sherman's vote has astonished —I may better say, astounded—me. Evarts made an excellent speech but did not convince even his colleague Hiscock. Hawley seems to have struck the fatal blow. I am sorry it should have been wielded by a New England man. But after all, the death of the measure will always lie at the door of Carlisle and Randall, who for successive sessions have smothered the Bill in the House. It ought to have passed by a unanimous vote in both branches several years ago. Its passage now, by the casting vote of the Vice-president, or by any meagre majority, would have been anything but satisfactory.

I have always thought and said that the South could have the National Aid, if their Senators and Representatives would demand and sustain it. Daniel and Barbour, and others from the South, have done excellent work for it. . . .

ROBT. C. WINTHROP.

Curry had written to Winthrop a month earlier, in explanation of his pamphlet, that he had addressed it to the "Southern Representatives" and to the "Friends of Free Schools in the South," because he felt that he could make an appeal to them "as a Southern man, alike concerned with them in the proper adjustment of the most terrible problem that Civilization and Free Institutions ever encountered."

But, after all is said, the element of Education was not the only one that entered into the national legis-

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lative dealings with the Blair Bill; and it was not solely the work of the two democratic Speakers of the House which killed it, as Mr. Winthrop thought. The old, irrepressible doctrine of the rights of the States, which must last as long as the written Constitution of our government retains significance, counted for more in the contest over the Blair Bill than the casual observer may have thought; and though disciples of Calhoun, like Curry, supported it, there can be little doubt that its final defeat may be conservatively attributed to the constitutional objection of its opponents. It may be said that the Blair Bill was submitted to the judgment of Congress from high, just motives; and, whatever the political view of it, there can be but little doubt that its defeat retarded educational development in the South seriously for two generations.

Later in the year 1890 the opportunity was offered Curry, and accepted by him, of enlarging his educational work in the South, with an especial view to "the adjustment of the most terrible problem that Civilization and Free Institutions ever encountered," as he had phrased it to Winthrop, and the consideration of which had caused the latter to say to the former in a letter dated Sept. 6, 1890: "Oh, that the Ethiopian could change his skin! If there were any mode of bleaching the negro, our land would be at peace." Under date of October 31, 1890, Curry writes in his diary:—

> At Rennert Hotel in Baltimore met President Hayes by appointment, who wished to urge my acceptance of an appointment as Chairman of Committee of Education of Slater Fund, to manage that as I have the Peabody.
>
> Held the matter under consideration.

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November 5, left (Richmond) for New York.

Had an interview with Mr. Winthrop in reference to my acceptance of the administration of the Slater Fund. Much gratified at offer. Approves my taking it if the labor be not too great.

November 25, . . . Agreed to accept the position.

Shortly before his death, Curry wrote the following account of his election as Manager of the Slater Fund, and of the nature and uses of the Fund itself:—

On the 30th October, 1890, President Hayes, who was President of the Slater Board, wrote to Mr. Winthrop, the Chairman of the Peabody Trustees:—

"The General Agent of the John F. Slater Education Fund has been chosen Bishop of the Methodist Church, South. This deprives the Board of the services of Bishop Haygood. With entire unanimity the Slater Board now prefer that Dr. Curry, the Agent of the Peabody Board, should take up the work laid down by Bishop Haygood. He is elected a member of the Slater Board, and is made Chairman of its Educational Committee, and will have an assistant. Both the Chief Justice and myself approved of the plan, and I am very solicitous that it will meet your approval. Dr. Curry will write you in regard to it. Indeed, he will abide by your judgment in the matter."

The Peabody Board assenting, I accepted the position of Chairman of the Educational Committee, with the general powers and duties exercised by Bishop Haygood. The sphere of operation of the two Funds, and the general objects being partially the same,—the Peabody Fund being for the benefit of both races, and the Slater for the colored people,—it seemed, as has proved to be true, that the administration being in the same hands, the one somewhat supplementing the other, there would be no conflict, but increased efficiency.

The Slater Board in entrusting the general management

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of the educational problems to a new Agency, declared that it favored the policy of concentration upon a comparatively small number of institutions, especially deserving encouragement, paying attention to geographical position, to business methods, to service rendered in training of teachers, and to efforts made in the promotion of industrial training. Much has been said and done in connection with industrial training in schools; and not a few unwarrantable claims have been made as to earliest suggestion and introduction. The Slater Trustees do not make any such pretensions as to originating what has long had advocacy and adoption; but it can with truth be said that since the organization of the Fund aid has uniformly been conditioned upon industrial instruction. In the Reports annually made to the Trustees, and in the occasional papers which the Fund had published, there have been in the presentation of the Negro problem, strongest insistence, for national, social, moral, individual reasons, upon industrial and manual training, and upon better preparation of teachers for their great work. The author of this sketch would not presumptuously claim any undue merit, but he confidently appeals to the published and emphatic testimonials, borne to the value of his work and counsels by the principals of Tuskegee, Spelman, Hampton, Claflin, Tongaloo, and other colored schools.

It may be pardonable vanity to record the fact that in Marion, Ala., in 1866, aided by Gov. Moore and Drs. McIntosh and Raymond, the pastors of the Baptist and Presbyterian Churches, a meeting was called which passed resolutions, prepared and introduced by myself, favoring the education of the colored people by the white people of the South.

Dr. Booker T. Washington, Principal of Tuskegee Institute, the most far-seeing man of his race in his generation in America, has paid eloquent tribute to this view of Curry's, with regard to what should

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constitute the right education of the colored people of the South, in a monograph entitled "Education of the Negro," in President Nicholas Murray Butler's "Education in the United States". In a brief letter of this period, Washington summarizes his philosophy of the training of his race in a striking sentence:—

TUSKEGEE, ALA., Oct. 24, 1898.

DR. J. L. M. CURRY,
WASHINGTON, D. C.

MY DEAR SIR:

Your check for the first quarter's Slater Fund money has been received and we are most grateful.

I am very glad that you like my Chicago address. It was one of the very few times that I have ever referred to race prejudice, because I realize that it is a thing that must be *lived* down, not *talked* down. I referred to it as much for the benefit of the white man as for the black man. The President seemed greatly pleased with what I said.

Yours sincerely,
BOOKER T. WASHINGTON.

President Angell adds his approbation of Curry's views on Negro education in the following letter:—

ANN ARBOR, Dec. 26, 1895.

MY DEAR DR. CURRY:

I have read your Report and your Slater Paper on Negro Education with great interest, as I read all your writings on these subjects. I have not been in the far South since the War, and cannot well judge of the difficult features of the problem. But I know they are difficult, and I am glad to have the results of your study and observation. I have often raised in my own mind some questions as to the true functions of the schools, which our religious bodies are, with the highest motives, supporting in the

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South. It will be a great relief to us, if the South can herself take them off our hands, and provide the needed education. If not, then a wise co-ordination of them with the public school system should be sought. I take it, there must be some provision for training colored teachers and preachers. I often quote, and I shall never forget, a striking remark which you made at my house: "It must be eternally right to Christianize and to educate the Negro."

Yours very truly,

JAMES B. ANGELL.

That the Negro needed and needs to be both Christianized and educated was never doubted by Curry from the dark days of his first citizenship, when, out of the Egyptian blackness of bondage and comparative heathenism, he was suddenly invested with all the rights and duties of American citizenship. That he could be both Christianized and educated, and that upon his Christianization and his right education rested the hope of his race, and the safety and prosperity of the white race with whom he dwelt, were likewise maintained by Curry, with a zeal and enthusiasm that remained unabated to the end, and were worthy of the praise that such lofty and unselfish zeal and enthusiasm should always command.

In "the Publications of the Southern History Association" for March, 1901, more than five years after the date of Dr. Angell's letter, is given an account of a meeting at Montgomery, Alabama, in May, 1900,—a "conference on the race problems of the South," which was attended by and enlisted the most earnest consideration and thought of some of the best intellects of the country, North and South; among others who participated in its deliberation

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being W. Bourke Cockran, Herbert Welsh, Hilary A. Herbert, Clifton R. Breckinridge, Paul B. Barringer, H. B. Frizell, J. D. Dreher, A. M. Waddell, and J. L. M. Curry. The account states that "the overruling note sounding through all their words was pessimistic. Economically, morally, religiously, even physically, this sad key was struck time and again. There was one variation of relief to the solemn strain, the hope placed on the uplifting power of education. Especially was this emphasized by Dr. Curry."

With all of his ceaseless work, held to its highest pitch by the enthusiastic will—the *vis a tergo*—of an unbending and dauntless courage, he found from year to year, as the busy man always finds, new time for other and newer work.

In a letter to Winthrop he writes:—

> This week I attended the Commencement of the Normal School at Farmville. As I drew the bill for the organization of the School and the Peabody Fund has been helpful in its assistance, I have consented to continue as Trustee, while firmly declining the Presidency of the Board.

On October 7, 1891, Curry was unanimously elected an honorary member of the Peabody Board, to continue in that position so long as he should remain General Agent of the Fund. On the next day he attended a meeting, held in New York City, of the Educational Committee of the Slater Fund, of which Committee he was the chairman. Meetings of the Slater Board, or of the Educational Committee, were held generally twice in each year; and the fall meeting was usually arranged in convenient connection, as to time and place, with the annual meeting of the Peabody Board. The dominating figure among the Slater Trustees was that of Ex-President Hayes,

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between whom and Curry, as has heretofore appeared in these pages, had existed a personal friendship since their college days together at Harvard, in the early '40's, which was cemented by their later official associations with the Peabody and Slater Trusts. In November of 1891 Mr. Hayes, upon the invitation of Curry, accompanied him on a visit to the States of South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Tennessee; and upon this tour much appeared of a character to interest and please the ex-President.

Curry relates, among others, the following incident of their journey:—

While visiting schools aided from the Slater and Peabody Funds, and studying educational and social problems, the people availed themselves cheerfully of a coveted opportunity of greeting an ex-President, and showing him a grateful appreciation of generous action for their relief from military authority and discriminating disabilities. Riding together near Orangeburg, S. C., and seeing a negro cabin in a cotton patch, he asked whether there would be any impropriety in his entering it, as he had never been inside of such a home. Stopping the carriage, I conducted him to the low, dark, illy-furnished, one-room cabin, in which was a woman, with a very young babe lying in a cradle. He examined the surroundings, asked in kind manner many questions, and as he was leaving gave her a silver dollar. Unobserved by the President, I told the woman who her visitor was, and how highly she had been honored. She broke out into exclamations of wonder and praise, clapping her hands in delight, and then informed the President, arrested by her jubilant cries, that she would give the baby his name.

It was not very long after this that Curry was called upon to assist in paying the last sad tribute of

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mortality to his friend. Mr. Hayes died early in January, 1893, and Curry was an honorary pall-bearer at his funeral. As an example of their affectionate relations this kindly letter from Mr. Hayes has interest:—

SPIEGEL GROVE, OHIO, April 20, 1891.

MY DEAR DR. CURRY:

I have read with admiration and pleasure, to the last syllable, your study of Gladstone. It is so wonderfully good that I must be excused for this fervid note. Your little book is most attractive and statesmanlike. Gladstone's matchless career is excellently told. I am, perhaps, less impressed by him than you are. I turned to Macaulay's "Gladstone on Church and State." M. speaks of G.'s language as having "a certain obscure dignity and sanctity." This gives my notion of his style and quality. But only think of M.'s article written in April 1839—52 years ago—in which G. is spoken of as the "rising hope," "the cautious leader," etc., etc., and G. still "on deck" after this lapse of time! Thanks for the book and sincere congratulations on its excellence.

Faithfully,

RUTHERFORD B. HAYES.

DR. CURRY.

In his journal for the month he records the death of three illustrious acquaintances—that of Rutherford B. Hayes on the 17th; of L. Q. C. Lamar on the 23rd, and of James G. Blaine on the 24th. In a letter to his son, written from Madrid in December, 1886, he compared Mr. Blaine with Mr. Cleveland, thus:—

I am anxious to see the Message of the President. The spoils-hunting Democrats abuse him, but he is a man of deep convictions and of sound principles. He is worth a thousand men like Blaine.

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A visit with his wife to Europe in 1892 broke the monotony of his educational and literary labors,—for during his most exacting work as representative of the two great educational trusts which he administered, he found time to do a large amount of literary work of one kind or another; and he enjoyed the rest and recreation of a six months' journey through France, Germany, Turkey, Austria, Italy and Switzerland.

Under date of May 19, 1893, he writes in his journal the following interesting item, illustrating the friendship which may exist between democracy and royalty:—

> Infanta Eulalia, Infante Antoine and suite arrived in Washington at 8:10 P. M. We met them at the station, and Infanta gave Mary a double kiss.

This visit of members of the royal Spanish household was incident to the Columbian Exposition at Chicago; and during the latter part of June, at Chicago, the Currys and the royal party were much together.

Among the distinguished guests, who upon occasion attended the annual banquets of the Peabody Board in New York, were the Honorable Joseph Chamberlain, M. P., and his wife, who were present at the banquet of October, 1893.

Curry writes of the Englishman:—

> Chamberlain spoke contemptuously of Trevelyan; omitted no opportunity of making a fling at Gladstone; said Pitt was the greatest of English statesmen. The conversation turning on the Presidential exercise of the veto power, I remarked, by way of contrast, that its exercise now in England would come near creating a

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revolution, as no sovereign since Queen Anne had interposed the prerogative. To this he promptly and stoutly objected, and said it had been used several times "in this century" to defeat legislation. I knew I was right, but preferred not to controvert the point beyond saying that May's Constitutional History of England was my authority.

This was the last meeting of the Peabody Board at which Mr. Winthrop was present. At the meeting of October, 1894, his address was read, but feeble health prevented his personal attendance. His death occurred but little more than a month later. On November 21 Curry attended his funeral at Trinity Church, Boston.

As above stated, Curry, in the spare moments of his active and busy life, engaged industriously in literary pursuits.

"My diplomatic career leaves this pleasant remembrance," he writes in 1891, "I did aid some historical investigations. Mr. Alexander Brown, Mr. John Mason Brown, Mr. Henry C. Lea, and Mr. J. G. Shea have been privately profuse, two of them publicly grateful, in their expressions of indebtedness for aid I had the happiness to render them in their researches. The Government archives will make no mention of this, but I think I did the country some service in this incidental way."

And at an earlier date he had written:—

Apropos of the 4th of July, I have been able to find in the archives at Seville copies of letters written by Governor Patrick Henry to the Governor of Louisiana, during the Revolutionary War. Our friend, Wm. Wirt Henry, in his diligent search for material for the biography he nearly has ready for the press, of his grandfather, put me

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on the track, and I was happy in being able to unearth them. During my residence in Madrid, through the partiality and cheerful co-operation of Spanish officials, I have been successful in furnishing valuable assistance to Shea of New Jersey, the Browns of Kentucky and Virginia, Lea of Philadelphia, Bowen of New York, in their historical researches.

He had, himself, written during his stay at Madrid, "Constitutional Government in Spain," which was published in 1889, and a "Life of William Ewart Gladstone," that came from the press in 1891. In 1894 he had another work ready for publication, on "The Southern States of the American Union," considered in their relation to the constitution of the United States. Following this volume, at intervals of three or four years, two others were given by him to the public. In 1898 appeared from the Cambridge University Press a "Sketch of George Peabody, and a History of the Peabody Education Fund through Thirty Years;" and in 1901 he published his last and perhaps his most valuable work—a "Civil History of the Government of the Confederate States, with some Personal Reminiscences."

Space does not admit of a discussion in these pages of Curry's books. It is sufficient to say of them that they illustrate the writer's industry and ability; and are works of serious purpose and solid merit, though lacking in the charm and attractiveness of his spoken discourse.

Of his volume on "The Southern States of the American Union," William L. Wilson, a fine and scholarly figure in recent American politics, wrote him a letter which has value and interest in the light of the course of events in the past fifteen years.

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OFFICE OF POSTMASTER GENERAL,
WASHINGTON, D. C., Nov. 28, 1895.

MY DEAR DOCTOR CURRY:

I have waited until I could look over the pages of the printed book, you so kindly permitted to read in *MS.* before sending you my acknowledgment of the copy you left for me at my office. To-day I have enjoyed for the first time an opportunity of re-reading some of its chapters, and I repeat, with unqualified emphasis, my first judgment:—That such a book ought to be written, and that you have written the needed volume. It seems to me to lack nothing in compactness, clearness, and unflinching truth of statement and historic authentication.

To reconstruct ideas and opinions adverse to the South, in so far as they are founded on ignorance and prejudice, is becoming more and more the task of Sisyphus. Your book ought, at least, to restore the proper historic perspective to the present generation of Southerners who are without "prejudice," and to compel a re-examination of the record from the fair-minded and honest student of history in all sections. And it delights me to hear that it is having a large circulation. It cannot but influence the final judgment of the future. I cannot see how it could have been written by any one who had not lived in, and borne his part in, the great struggles of the last forty years; and coming from you, who have done so much, since the warlike part of those struggles ended, to restore fraternity of spirit as well as of political association, it ought to arrest the attention and reform the judgment of every teacher of history in college or university. You, and I, in my humble way, have felt that our highest duty to our own section lay in devotion to the best interests of the whole country, and in the steady advocacy of national issues great enough to wipe out sectionalism. I rejoiced in the great tariff struggle, not only because we were fighting for a true national policy, but because I saw how effectually the rise of that question had obliterated

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geographical lines. To-day I have been more than usually despondent, as I see how the folly of our Southern people in taking up a false and destructive issue, and assaulting the very foundations of public and private credit, are throwing away the solid fruits of the great victory, solidifying the North as it never was solid in the burning days of reconstruction, and condemning the South to a position of inferiority, and of lessening influence in the Union, she has never before reached. I am amazed at the blindness of leaders and followers, and deeply feel its reflex influence on all the past record of that section; and how much harder it makes the task you have so conscientiously performed.

But I must not use my leisure hour to inflict too long a letter on you. Let me thank you again for writing this volume, and tender my gratitude for the copy you have given me.

Most sincerely yours,
WM. L. WILSON.

HON. J. L. M. CURRY.

Again and for the sixth time Curry sailed for Europe in January of 1895, and arrived at Rome on the first day of the following month, whither Mrs. Curry had preceded him. Here he visited his old friend, Cardinal Rampolla; and later spent some time in the island of Corfu, and in various points of Greece. A letter to his grandchildren displays the tender nature and eager, observing spirit which kept him young to the end:—

ON STEAMER "VESTA," ADRIATIC SEA.
19 Apr. 95.

MY DEAR CHILDREN:

I send this congratulating Mary L. and Manly on their birthdays and wishing them health, happiness and prosperity.

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My last letter was posted at Corinth. By rail we travelled from there to Mycenæ, the home of Agamemnon, the leader of the Greeks in the Trojan war. Here Dr. Schlieman found the rich golden treasures in the royal tombs, of which I wrote you, as being preserved in the National Museum at Athens. By carriage we drove through the Argolese plain, fertile and dry, delightful in the twilight, to Nauplia.

Naples. 21st.—*En route* to N. we visited the Heræon, the ancient national sanctuary of Argolis, corresponding to the Acropolis in Athens. We had to leave our carriage half an hour away and climb the rough ascent, but one of the young men met us and gave us a cordial welcome, and also a cup of refreshing tea. The excavations of late years have been made by, or under the supervision of various archæological societies, Greek, German and American. These ruins are made by the American School. Work was suspended because of Easter, but we saw Hoppin, Tilton, Rogers and others. These and others are distinguished graduates of our universities, who receive fellowships because of their excellent scholarships.

Epidaurus, on the east of the Peloponnesus, has a most magnificent and well-preserved ruin of a temple, which is very large and was constructed against a semi-circular mountain. The acoustics were very remarkable. From the uppermost seat, 190 feet distant from and 75 feet above the orchestra, a low tone of voice could be heard. Here also was a temple for the *cult* of Æsculapius, the god of healing. One is puzzled to know how these immense and costly structures could have been built in a country not densely populated and not rich. We wandered over the remains of these old buildings, put up 2500 years ago and were compensated for an all-day carriage ride.

Nauplia is built on a kind of promontory, projecting into the sea, was the first capitol of the modern Greek kingdom, is the seat of an arch-episcopate, and has some commerce. We were there during Good Friday and

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Easter evening, and going on the night before Easter, or rather at the midnight of Easter, was a grand religious ceremony. The church was packed with people, each one of whom, old or young, male and female, held in hand a long unlighted candle. When the clock struck twelve, the archbishop in his clerical vestments, a tall handsome man, came through a narrow door, behind the main altar, holding a silver candelabra with six branches, each having a lighted candle. On his appearance, many, mainly boys, rushed forward to light their candles. The archbishop drew back and reproved the irreverent eagerness, and then less violently, candles were lit from his. As he opened the door, I should have said that he proclaimed, "The Lord is risen indeed." The whole assembly proceeded to the plaza in front of the church, where a rude but decorated platform was erected. On it were seated or standing military and civil officers and the archbishop. When the last read the Evangel, a procession was formed, which marched through the streets, singing, firing crackers, shooting off rockets and giving vent to their joy, which however interesting to them, kept us from sleeping.

Looking out, early Easter morning, on the square in front of the hotel, we saw the soldiers roasting their paschal lambs or sheep, cleaned and disemboweled, the carcass had thrust through it, from head to tail, a long pole or spit, which by two men, was slowly revolved, near embers or ashes until the meat was thoroughly roasted and looked very appetizing. Some kind of sauce, the ingredients of which were salt, pepper and lemon juice (not vinegar) was, from time to time, put upon the turning body. Easter, besides being a religious festival, is a national holiday, and little work is done in shop or field, until the following Thursday. Every family, even the poorest, has a lamb roasted, and this consumption of mutton helps to account for the great number of sheep which are to be found in Greece. We saw thousands,

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which in a few days, will be driven to the mountains for pasturage. On the streets and in the villages we saw the lambs roasting, and officers and soldiers take meals together, for Easter equalizes all ranks.

I had long had a desire to see a baptism performed after the Greek ritual and on Easter night I had the curiosity gratified. The ceremony took about 20 minutes for its performance, and was participated in by priests, responsive choristers, mother, godfather, and witnessed by about thirty persons. Places of honor were assigned to us and after the baptism, parents, priests, and others shook hands with us. A tin basin, near the middle of the church, was more than half filled with water and oil was added, while the priest read the ritual. He made a cross with his hand three times in the water; subsequently breathed upon it three times, each time making a cross in the water. The child having been undressed was held by the godfather, and the priest anointed head, hands and feet with oil, and then besmeared the body. Soon afterwards, he immersed the little fellow, about six months old, three times in the water, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. When the clothes were put on, a charge was given to the godfather, who repeated it to the mother. I was asked to name the child, but as neither Jabez nor Lamar could be readily Grecized, I suggested William, the name of my friend, Mr. Kingsland, who was rich and believed in baptism of babies. It is the custom for the one who gives the name to give a suit of clothes, and my friend readily "shelled out" twenty dollars in gold. When we were in the train the next morning, father, mother, baby, brothers, grandparents came to take leave of us, evidently pleased that "Gulielmus" had such a good start in life.

We had a long day's travel to reach Patras, our road, as when we visited Athens, skirting the Gulf of Corinth. It is a pity that the Canal between the Gulf and the Eastern waters is too narrow a shelter for large vessels,

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as the route would be most charming for visitors to the classic land.

During our stay in the Peloponnesus we had the services of an industrious and polite dragoman, who was a good commissary and quartermaster, and an unscrupulous extortioner.

The night we reached Patras, about twelve o'clock, a fire broke out near the hotel and all the town gathered to witness the sight. We packed trunk and bags and made ready for a precipitate exodus, but were saved that experience.

To-morrow Dr. Taylor and I will start to Sicily.

With best love from both of us to all, we are,

Yours lovingly,

J. L. M. CURRY.

MANLY CURRY TURPIN,
MARY LAMAR TURPIN,
Americus, Georgia.

May found him and his wife in Florence, where he gave sittings to a sculptor for a marble bust, which was completed in the following November. In March he met Goldwin Smith and left a little thumb-nail sketch of him which is worth quoting:—

In 1861, Arnold wrote of him, "personally, a most able, in some respects even interesting man." At a dinner at which he was present in Washington City, 26 March, 1896, he seemed to me to be a soured, discontented man. Of Chamberlain, "able without morals;" Gladstone, "writes on theology and science about which he is ignorant;" Palmerston, "a Russophobist;" Napoleon, "wanted European recognition, and brought on the Crimean War," which all regretted afterwards. He (Smith) saw no reason why Russia should not have an outlet to Mediterranean. "The Jews are getting behind the press, in Europe and America."

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During the years 1896 and 1897 Curry appears to have been especially interested in those concerted movements in America in favor of the World's Peace, which were then claiming, and have since continued to claim wide attention. At Washington in April, 1896, a National Arbitration Conference for the promotion of international arbitration, at which more than forty states of the Union were represented, was in session for two days. Curry was appointed by this assembly one of a committee of five, with George F. Edmunds, James B. Angell, Henry Hitchcock, and Gardiner G. Hubbard, to prepare and present to the President of the United States a memorial in behalf of the accompanying resolution of the Conference; and this memorial was personally presented to Mr. Cleveland by a sub-committee composed of Messrs. Curry and Hubbard on May 14th. Curry's interest in international arbitration is again evidenced in January, 1897, by the following entry in this journal:—

January 18.—At 5 P. M. at Hon. John W. Foster's attended a conference to promote the ratification of the Anglo-American Treaty.

In this connection at subsequent dates appeared in the journal these entries, significant of his continued attitude towards the great question of the World's Peace:—

February 27, 1897.—Called and took leave of President Cleveland. Evidently moved. Had little to encourage him, amid so much partisanship and treachery except assurance of confidence of friends and the consciousness of duty done. It seemed as if some Senators were trying

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to precipitate a war with Spain. Had gloomy forebodings as to party and country.

March 28, 1898.—To the House, and heard President McKinley's Message transmitting Report of Court of Inquiry on " Maine " disaster.

Galleries packed.

March 29.—Dinner to Senator Gorman by Governor Carroll. Mr. Thompson, Senators Allison, Gray, and Hale, Speaker Reed, Justice White, Mr. Barrett, Admiral ....., General ....., and myself. All opposed to war. Speaker and Senators despondent; thought insane war feeling would plunge us into untold trouble.

On October 6, 1896, a special committee of the Peabody Board of Trustees met in New York City, to consider the expediency of terminating the Trust in the following February. After due deliberation, they decided to report an adverse judgment; and at the meeting of the Board the next day, the decision of the committee was unanimously confirmed. Curry submitted his annual Report; and was re-elected General Agent.

Perhaps no year of his career was a busier one in the work done by him with State legislatures than was that of 1897.

He appeared before the legislative bodies of the States of North Carolina, Arkansas, Texas, Florida and Georgia, and made addresses on behalf of education.

Uninterrupted and incessant work was the mainspring of his life. His interest in life never failed him and he could not deny himself to popular demand. When not urging upon State legislative assemblies the importance and necessities of educating the people, his energies were spent in other

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directions no less significant. In 1898 he addressed, among other bodies and gatherings of influence, the Constitutional Convention of the State of Louisiana; and he spoke later in the year at the opening of the Domestic Science Building at Hampton, upon the thirtieth anniversary of the foundation of the Hampton School. On the fourth of July, at Chicago, he delivered an address to the assembled faculties, students and patrons of the University of Chicago on the "Principles, Acts, and Utterances of John C. Calhoun, Promotive of the True Union of the States."

With all his unabated loyalty to the people of his section of the Union, and to the memories of the tremendous conflict in which they had once engaged in behalf of their view of constitutional liberty, it may be said of Curry with absolute truthfulness, that the most impressive thing about him in his post-bellum period was his intense and shining Americanism. He must figure always in the thought of those, who know his life and have followed his career, rather as an American than as an Alabamian or a Virginian or a Southerner. He had believed in his youth, with a passionate belief, in the theoretical ethics of secession. He did not change that belief in his old age, and after varied experiences. Calhoun was second only to Aristotle in his regard; albeit the flag of the Union stirred his highest eloquence, and the great, unrended nation, with its dreams, its needs, its perils, its ideals had come to appeal to him as did nothing else on earth.

At the moment, on the 4th of July, in that summer of 1898, when he was making this address, just mentioned, before the University of Chicago, in the waters about Santiago the American warships were

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thundering out the knell of Spanish rule within the Western Hemisphere. As he was defending, with all the power and passion of his mind and heart, the constitutional orthodoxy of the great South Carolinian's theory of the Federal Government, at intervals a messenger boy would arrive upon the scene with a telegram; and the proceedings were interrupted, while the announcement was read of the destruction of another and yet another Spanish ship, amid the patriotic applause of the audience. Then the speaker would turn to the Star-Spangled Banner, draping the platform, and make it the basis of an appeal for unity and nationality; and after the applause had died away, would revert again to Calhoun and his great philosophy of government, without a lost note in his eloquence.

To have passed a morning with John Caldwell Calhoun, Santiago and the American flag vividly entwined before the face of an American audience, was something more than interesting or dramatic in the man who accomplished it. In it an essential characteristic of his being stood revealed. His real genius and passion were for adaptability to environment without the surrender of principle,—for sympathy with his time,—for service on the side of its better forces,—for the future, despite the past. Two letters referring to this address from antipodal sources illustrate vividly his power of appeal and the strength of his contention:—

54 WALL STREET, NEW YORK,
January 20th, 1898.

MY DEAR DR. CURRY:

Thank you very much for yours of the 17th. I can hardly tell you how much I value your favorable opinion, even while I think it too eulogistic.

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To say the truth I was not in very good trim while writing it and feared that it was a mere collection of common-places. I came to think a little better of it before I delivered it, and after hearing what you and others have said, I am quite puffed up.

You have a very interesting subject to deal with at Chicago. I have long been of the belief that the animating motive of all the later of Mr. Calhoun's efforts was his love of the Union and his deep concern lest it should fail,—not that he would sacrifice the South to it,—I do not expect men to give up kindred and firesides—but the fear which harassed him without cessation was that the feeling between North and South would be brought to such a point and so influence action, that a rupture would follow.

You may not find so concurring an audience as I did.

With very high esteem and regard,

Truly yours,

JAMES C. CARTER.

J. L. M. CURRY, LL.D.

157 STATE STREET, MONTPELIER, VT.

MY DEAR OLD FRIEND:

I have no words adequately to express my admiration of your wonderfully condensed and powerful statement of the respective rights of the States and the delegated powers of the General Government.

I can hardly keep silence when I hear our young people, the future conservators of our liberties, prating about "the arbitrament of war settling the question of the right of secession" and I am very glad you explained that war neither settled or impaired any fundamental right, though it might prove the power to nullify it for a time.

Your explanation of the primary cause of Mr. Calhoun's nullification theory is the one which those who knew him best always recognized—his overweening love for the

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Union and passionate desire to preserve it, which caused him to overlook the dangers of the remedy he advocated.

Your whole address forcibly reminds me of the appeals to which I have listened with breathless attention from dear Mr. Calhoun in the last years of his life when his mind dominated his fragile body so entirely that it rose almost into the realms of omniscient foresight and poured out the cumulative wisdom of his noble statesmanship in such terse argument that the loss of a word or part of a sentence seemed a misfortune.

Old and feeble as I am I should have been glad to go to Chicago to hear one more "old man eloquent," one more large minded statesman with "hands unstained with plunder" plead for the restoration of our inalienable liberty—and resting his efforts not on the adventitious aid and appeals of that eloquence of which I know you to be a past master, but on the clear concise recital of great truths based upon incontrovertible authority.

I never could understand the basic stability of Russia's despotism until I discovered in reading a history of the country that every little hamlet has its community independence with which the general despotism dare not interfere.

I have for some time wanted to ask a favor of you. My husband's tombstone can only receive 100 words of epitaph, and it is now ready for that so that it can be set in place before his statue, when it is finished, can be erected and unveiled in October next. Will you send me one for it. I have asked the same favor from several friends in different parts of the South so that I may get one of which all who loved him will approve and will then try to choose the one most suitable for it. May I have one from you? An epitaph is to me the verdict of his contemporaries and I attach great importance to it for posterity.

I am living here getting such comfort as I can from the magnificent scenery and the quiet of this little New

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England town and shall not leave here until the end of September when I shall return to New York. I went South last Spring and dismantled my house as the risk of leaving valuable things there was great, and without my darling I could not live in that isolated place alone. Now I "find my warmest welcome in an inn" and for the little time left to me on earth it is easier than housekeeping—and I feel like a lotus eater—and am willing to float without resistance to circumstance.

With much love to Mrs. Curry and thanks for your address,

Yours affectionately,

V. JEFFERSON DAVIS.

July 31st, 1898.

On November 12, 1898, Curry and his wife, in company with several intimate friends, sailed for Naples. They spent a month or more at Baiae and other places in the vicinity, in an atmosphere of old world memories and Horatian measures; and in the last days of December crossed the Mediterranean, and sojourned for a month or more of the New Year in Egypt. There they were presented to the Khedive; and amid the ancient glories of the Pyramids and the impressive ruins of Karnak and of Thebes, Curry's thoughts turned first of all to, and remained longest with the Egyptian schools. The heroic stories of Omdurman and Khartum—of the wild charge of the white-robed dervishes and the fate of "Chinese Gordon"—all came in for their full share of eager attention; but his most earnest contemplation of Egypt was of its missions and of the agencies of education developing in the ancient land.

Leaving the Nile Valley on St. Valentine's Day, they reached Naples again on the 17th of February;

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and after spending a few days in Rome, Monte Carlo and Paris, Curry and his wife arrived at New York in the latter part of March.

Under date of April 6, 1899, he writes in his diary:—

> Called on President McKinley, who received me cordially. I told him Lord Cromer's opinion that the government of Cuba and Porto Rico would be found more difficult than that of the Philippines; and he said he concurred, especially as to Cuba.

In June, 1899, Curry was elected the second President of the recently established Educational Conference that met at Capon Springs, West Virginia. Bishop Dudley of Kentucky had preceded him in the presidency of the Capon Springs Conference, and Dudley had been succeeded in that office by Mr. Robert C. Ogden of New York.

The fourth Conference, which would have met according to custom at Capon Springs, was diverted by the death of the proprietor of the hotel at that place to Winston-Salem, N. C. Here, under the inspiring influence and untiring energy of the new President, Mr. Robert C. Ogden, were set in motion the forces that finally resulted in the organization of the Southern Education Board in New York City on November 3, 1901. Dr. Curry was present at the organization of this new and vital force in American educational life, was made its supervising director, and seemed to perceive with great insight and enthusiasm the meaning of the organization which was being formed to carry forward and vitalize the plans for which he had long dreamed and worked. His associates were Robert C. Ogden, the President of the

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Board, George Foster Peabody, Charles D. McIver, Charles W. Dabney, Edwin A. Alderman, Wallace Buttrick, Hollis B. Frizzell, W. H. Baldwin, Albert Shaw, Walter H. Page, and Edgar Gardner Murphy. The occasion was characterized by Curry's splendid optimism; and his genial humor and forceful eloquence distinguished the banquet, which was attended by a notable company to greet the new force for good.

This Board was a natural and inevitable offspring of the activities of the Peabody Foundation. The great need in Southern life was the formation of a powerful public opinion for popular education. Curry, fast feeling the touch of the years, could not alone accomplish this task, though his strength were as the strength of ten. Public opinion in such great social movements must be continually strengthened and enlightened. This Board took up that task and may be said to have accomplished an amazing total of good in its short life. So untechnical and inspirational have been its influences, that it is difficult to describe them in any brief space. It had no funds to distribute to educational institutions. It sought to ally itself with State and local agencies. Its purpose has been steadily not to obtrude, but to efface itself in the interests of the people. Its fundamental principle was profound faith in the self-reliance and creative power of the people of the South. Its supreme desire was simply to help a great people struggling with the most difficult group of problems ever presented for solution to a democratic society. Its fundamental aims were to increase the habit of self-help among a people overburdened, but proud, and rightly determined to mould their institutions after their

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own way and with their own means. Mr. Edgar Gardner Murphy in a clear statement before the National Education Association in 1906 thus succinctly defines the functions of the Board as then outlined:—

The chief function of the Board has been the winning of rural communities to a larger policy of local taxation for school purposes. In States where the unit of taxation has been the county, assistance has been given to the "county campaign," the representatives of the Board helping in the organization of public meetings, defraying the actual expenses of effective speakers, creating and circulating the literature of the subject, and co-operating with the local educational leaders in an effort to secure an affirmative popular vote on the question of a larger local tax for the benefit of the schools.

Where the unit of taxation is the school district, the same methods are employed; the Board working here, as always, solely through the authorized and accepted agencies of the locality concerned. These local campaigns have powerfully affected the general school legislation of the State. State funds—heretofore the chief resource of the Southern school system—have rapidly increased, in a number of States, from 50 to 100 per cent. during the past five years. Local organizations of women for the improvement of rural schoolhouses have been established; or, in cases where such activities have already existed, they have been strengthened and equipped for still larger work. The movements for the formation of school libraries, for the development of high schools, for agricultural education and manual training have all received recognition and reinforcement. The Board does not assume that the educational awakening of the South has been due to its initiative, for that great movement was born in the South, had become irresistible before the formation of the Board, and has been carried

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forward by Southern leaders, but its vital part in this arousal of popular enthusiasm for the common schools is generally recognized. Its activities have been conspicuous and at many points decisive.

In the year 1910, still under the Presidency of Robert C. Ogden, and assisted by the fine technical skill and statesmanlike grasp of Wyckliffe Rose, the successor to Curry as General Agent of the Peabody Fund, this Board is busily at work in cordial co-operation with the State authorities of every Southern State, upon the greatest and most pressing of our present educational tasks, the unification of the State's educational forces. In October, 1902, Curry attended his last meeting of this Board whose aims and policies he so cordially approved. His appearance at that time greatly moved his associates. His handsome face was drawn with pain and his graceful figure wasted by suffering, and in his eyes those who loved him saw, with unspeakable pain, the look that betokens the sight of another world. But he attended to his duties, met his friends with the high courtesy that sat so well upon him, and bore himself like a proud man who does not fear death nor anything but failure to bear his share of the work to be done. His inability to attend the Athens Conference in the Spring had elicited this characteristically modest letter from the president of the Conference:—

NEW YORK, June 6, 1902.

HON. J. L. M. CURRY,
Care MORGAN, HARGES & CO.,
PARIS, FRANCE.

MY DEAR DR. CURRY:

I am in your debt for two recent favors, the last under date of May 25th, at hand this morning. You were

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respectfully and gratefully remembered throughout the entire Athens Conference, and, although your absence was deeply felt, your spiritual presence was constantly in evidence. Both for our sake and yours I regret that you could not take part in and observe the development of the ideas in which we are so deeply interested and the broadening sympathy with which they are received. We, of course, all understand the delicacy of our work, and therefore it is a great satisfaction that the Conference proceeded from start to finish with a manly expression of opinion and yet without any interruption to the spirit of the harmony.

My own relation to the whole affair is much like that of a conductor to a street car, my duty being to ring the bell for the starting and stopping and so much intent upon the progress of the vehicle that I cannot take in very clearly what the passengers are talking about. Therefore I lose a great deal of the instruction and inspiration that I would prefer to receive.

The more comprehensive our knowledge of the needs, and appreciation of the delicacy of the question with which we are involved, the more stupendous does the task appear to me to be. Considered in the mass—hopeless; taken up in detail—full of encouraging signs. Just when and how it is all to work out I do not see clearly, but have the faith that, because right is right, it will eventually result in conditions that will make for peace and prosperity of our common country.

All of your friends and the people everywhere have been delighted over the success of your mission to Spain, and we hope that you are now to have such a period of rest as will bring both you and Mrs. Curry back with renewed strength.

Your grand-daughter was most welcome to all the guests on our Southern excursion. At Athens we had three other young women from the South, who accompanied us all the way round to New York. To the entire

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company this group of four Southern girls seemed the crowning grace of our excursion.

Very sincerely yours,

ROBERT C. OGDEN.

The development of the common schools seemed to Curry the great fundamental proposition in social progress; and his estimate of its significance is illustrated by a paragraph contained in the last annual Report that he ever made to the Peabody Board.

It should be a cardinal maxim that the true purpose of the school is to fit the child for the duties of the man, to train the whole man in right-mindedness, in personal worth, in character shaped by truth and duty, in the knowledge and achievements necessary for the life of the citizen. That was a striking remark of Governor Russell: "There is an everlasting difference between making a living and making a life."

Two more interesting items, belonging to the year 1899, may be chosen for chronicle here, out of a great number that might be noted if space permitted. On November 2nd and 3rd was held at Washington a meeting of the National University Committee; and Curry and his wife entertained the Committee at dinner. For a number of years their home had been in Washington in order to facilitate the work he had in hand. A Washington newspaper gave the following account of this function:—

Hon. J. L. M. Curry, a member of the National University Committee, gave a dinner last night to his colleagues. The guests were President Eliot of Harvard; President Harper of Chicago University; President Alderman of the University of North Carolina; President Wilson of Washington and Lee; President Draper of

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Illinois University; Justices Brewer and Brown of the Supreme Court; Assistant Secretary Hill of the State Department; Mr. Langley of the Smithsonian; Mr. Kapon of the Bering Sea Commission; Superintendents Maxwell and Soldan, of the city schools of New York and St. Louis; Professor Murray Butler of Columbia University; Mr. Dougherty, late President of the National Education Association; Mr. Canfield, Librarian of Columbia University; Dr. Harris of the Bureau of Education; Mr. Putnam of the Library of Congress; and Mr. Proctor of the Civil Service Commission.

In December the following entry occurs in his journal:—

B. F. Johnson, book publisher, of Richmond, Va., proposes a series of ten historical volumes, to be prepared by competent authors, and invites me to be editor-in-chief.

Men had not yet lost confidence in the veteran educator and scholar's power for usefulness, though he had already passed beyond the mark of the Psalmist's three-score years and ten.

During a considerable part of this year, he suffered, as his diary shows, frequent and painful attacks of kidney trouble. On the 18th of June he notes that he began "electrical treatment." These physical disabilities, however,—premonitory as they were,—were not sufficient to daunt his restless spirit, or to give pause to his energy in public service. Responsibilities did not cease to increase upon him; yet the natural fires of his genius continued to burn with unabated flame. Besides attending to his accustomed duties as General Agent of the Peabody and Slater Funds, in visiting and addressing schools, legislatures and educational meetings, he made many

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occasional addresses of a more general character. In May, 1900, he attended a "Race Conference" at Montgomery, Alabama, where, as has been heretofore mentioned, his voice almost alone was one of hope for the future of the negro through education; on June 12 he delivered an address at the University of Virginia, taking for his theme the noble subject of "Law and Liberty," the Scotch-Irishman's motto, since the day of McNeill and "the Red Hand of Ulster;" and discussing the subject with a wealth of argument and of illustration that emphasized the duty and the opportunity of the South, to be accomplished through the work of its educated young men. In October he visited Tulane University, and delivered an address.

Under the date of November 26, 1900, occurs the following entry in the journal:—

> Mary and I went to Baltimore; she to see the dressmaker, I to see Dr. Gilman, whose proposed resignation of the Presidency of Johns Hopkins University, to take effect at the end of the session, has been widely published and commented on. He suggested that he would like, in conjunction with my work and Southern visits, to give much of the remainder of his life, after thirty-five years in college and university work, to the study of Education in the South.

This entry is but little more than an echo of the many similar ones that appear from time to time in Curry's diaries, showing how often and how sympathetically the two men had before this time discussed a subject which so interested each of them.

In April, 1901, he attended the Fourth Conference for Education in the South, held at Winston-Salem,

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North Carolina; and in June of this year he made the commencement address before the Literary Societies of the University of Georgia upon the occasion of its centennial celebration.

Fourteen years earlier, he had received from this institution the degree of Doctor of Laws; and sixty years before this centennial date, he had been a student within its walls, and a member of one of the Societies that he now addressed.

The Peabody Trust whose work he was soon to lay down actively will always have a peculiar and tender significance to the people of the South. Conceived in sympathy, administered with tact and diplomacy, and yet with farsightedness and justice, it came at just the nick of time, and did a fundamental service. It was a small endowment, as we now measure such things, though at the time it attracted the attention of the civilized world and helped to win for its giver a resting place in Westminster Abbey. Its income was never much in excess of $150,000, yet it sought to establish an enduring system of common schools in the Southern States for both races. This daring program practically succeeded, because its policy of stimulation to self help touched a self-reliant and resilient population. Sears was a man of genius and diplomacy in school organization. Curry was a man of inspiration before the masses. By the time Curry assumed control, three-fifths of all income went to teacher training and two-fifths to special cases of public school development. Four great enduring achievements may be claimed as the result of Curry's administration:—

1. The establishment of State Normal Schools for each race in twelve Southern States.

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2. The establishment of a system of public graded schools everywhere in the cities and small towns.

3. The establishment, in the minds of legislators, of the rural, common school as an everlasting responsibility.

4. The production of a body of literature by Curry in his forty reports and ten published addresses which appealed to a people undertaking such a task as assuming responsibility for the education of all the people, as no body of literature had done since Jefferson's stirring appeals and classic definitions.

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CHAPTER XVIII

THE BIRTHDAY OF A KING

In the first month of 1902, Mrs. Curry was the recipient of the following note, written from Paris, in a strong feminine hand, on both sides of a four by five card, which bore the Spanish insignia of royalty:—

January 28th, 1902.

My Dear Mrs. Curry:

I am so happy to hear that Mr. Curry is appointed Special Envoy to Madrid upon the coming of age of our King, next May. I shall be there, and I am looking forward, with great joy, to meet you again. I imagine you will first stop in Paris, and in that case, most probably, I shall have the pleasure of seeing you also here; as I do not think I shall leave for Madrid before May.

With kind regards to all yours, believe me as ever,

Your very affectionate friend,

Eulalia.

It was a kindly note, that a Spanish princess should have written to an American lady, at a time when the memories of the sea fight at Santiago were still very fresh in the minds of American men, and very bitter in those of Spaniards; and it indicates the personal hold—the fine attachment—which the Currys had made upon the hearts and minds of the best of those with whom they had been thrown during their sojourn at Madrid.

On January 27, 1902, Curry wrote in his journal

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the following note, in which he places, before the record of his appointment as emissary to the Spanish Court, a memorial of his election into the oldest Greek-letter society of America, founded in the first year of the Revolution by a coterie of noble young spirits at the ancient capital of Williamsburg, Virginia,—a society, whose motto: "Philosophy, the guide of life," had been so singularly illustrated in his own career:—

Notice of election to membership in the Phi Beta Kappa Society of William and Mary.

Had a pleasant interview with President Roosevelt in reference to my Mission to Spain,—in reference to title.

1st. He thought it was or should be Ambassador.

2nd. There would be a Secretary.

3rd. As to compensation, referred to Secretary Hay.

4th. As to address on presentation, asked me to reduce to form, and submit to him.

On February 17 the commission and letter of credence as Special Envoy to Spain were received from the Secretary of State. On March 31 Curry called on the President, and submitted the proposed presentation address, which was cordially approved. A week later the following letter reached him from Secretary Hay:—

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
WASHINGTON, April 7, 1902.

DEAR DOCTOR CURRY:

Spain having indicated a wish that you should come as an Ambassador Extraordinary on Special Mission, the President has issued a new commission and a new letter of credence to you in that quality. These are sent to you to-day with a new instruction to accord therewith, all

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bearing the date of the old papers, which are cancelled and should be returned to the Department.

Very truly yours,
JOHN HAY.

Enclosures as above.
DOCTOR J. L. M. CURRY,
etc., etc., etc.,
Washington.

On Monday, April 14th, Curry went to Baltimore for a consultation concerning his health with Dr. William Osler of Johns Hopkins.

On April 18 Curry, with his wife and niece, Mrs. Connally Coxe, and a trained nurse, sailed on the "Staatdam." "It was his 19th crossing." They were joined in Paris by Mr. R. Simpkins of Boston, who had been appointed Secretary for this special mission.

Ten days later Curry and his party landed at Boulogne, whence they proceeded to Paris. Here they called by appointment on Mrs. Curry's friend, the Infanta Eulalia, and Queen Isabel, who received them with many marks of courtesy and cordiality. Upon their arrival at Madrid, they were met at the station by the Duke of Almodovar, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Sickles and many other Spanish dignitaries. The Marquis of Villalobar, an old and intimate friend, had with that extreme thoughtfulness that characterized the actions of the Spanish Government at that time been appointed Special Aide to the American Ambassador. Nothing could have exceeded the lavish hospitality which was extended to the Currys, not only as America's representatives on such a great occasion, but as old and well remembered friends, who had never been for-

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gotten by those who had known them, during their stay many years before. A beautiful villa was put at their disposal with many servants, guards and sentinels and all the details of luxurious living, from a carriage of the Royal Stables, with its men in full Royal livery, to the writing paper, and menu cards—all of which bore the Royal coat-of-arms.

On the 15th of April Curry writes in his diary:—

At 10 Secretary Simpkins and I, with Villalobar, went to the Palace and had an audience of Queen and King, and the Prince of Asturias.

His address on this occasion, which has been preserved among his papers, is not without interest as illustrating what an American citizen, clothed with the dignity of Ambassador Extraordinary, should say to a long-descended ruler, by the grace of God, arriving at his majority.

Curry said:—

I am charged as special Ambassador Extraordinary to bear you the greetings of the President and of the Government of the United States, as you stand with joyous expectation on the threshold of hope and progress, and to felicitate you on a long life, blessed by the example and spirit and teachings of a noble and world-honored mother, and to assure you of most cordial sympathy and co-operation in all efforts for development of resources, for adherence to the basal principles of law and order, and for the settlement of all differences on the basis of the equality of nations and stability of just governments. Science has made all the world akin, and no god, Terminus, stands at artificial barriers to arrest the flow of good-will or mutual helpfulness.

The object of this mission is to confirm anew the former utterances of my country's honored representative, and to reassure, in most emphatic manner, the earnest desire of

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the President and of the people, to cement in indissoluble bonds the friendship of the new nations. There can be no political antagonism, no well-founded or enduring antipathy, between two peoples alike anxious of, and equally purposing, the closest relations of amity. This mission is the strongest assurance,—may it be the guarantee,—of peace and friendship, of social and commercial intercourse, in the pursuit of a common end, a nobler civilization, choosing the good, rejecting the evil.

The well-being of one nation is a factor in the well-being of all; and I voice the universal sentiment of my country when I say Spain and the United States should be interlinked in chains of mutual interest, good will and happiness. America can never forget, must always honor, Spain's early and commanding history, her unquestioned superiority in the arts of policy and of war, her pre-eminence in art and literature, her chivalrous courage, tenacity of conviction, irrepressible vitality; and all nations will give her glad welcome as she springs forward to her ancient prestige, in rivalry for good government, for universal education, for accomplishing by best method, best skill, best abilities, best standards of action and belief, what will promote international harmony, domestic prosperity, and larger freedom. Peace is not a period of preparation for war, a whetting of swords for another conflict. It has a deeper, a diviner meaning,—the emulation of a brotherhood, which by infrangible bonds of a common interest and by international arbitration will make wars impossible.

As I was one of the first to hear the glad proclamation, *Viva el Rey!* from the lips of the present distinguished Premier, I come, for country and for self, after the lapse of sixteen years, to invoke blessings upon your Majesty and the Kingdom, and to wish for you abounding prosperity and happiness.

Curry remarks of the King, in his diary, as a comment upon the occasion:—

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He is a well-grown boy, and impressed me rather favorably; and does not seem as fragile as I expected.

On the following day Curry was a guest at the royal banquet at the Palace, and occupied a place of honor near the King. On the same day he was the recipient, at the hands of the government, of the decoration of the Royal Order of Charles III.

On Saturday, May 17, he writes in his journal:—

Lovely day. At 2 to Congress to witness the taking of the oath by the King in presence of the Royal family, Cortes, Diplomatic Corps, foreign representatives. Much enthusiasm. Young King behaved well.

Went to church, where to a crowded house, the *Te Deum* was sung. King, Queen, Royal family, government, etc., present.

At night Mary and I dined with Sir H. M. Durand of the British Embassy. Then rode through the packed and brilliantly illuminated streets.

For nearly a week longer the Currys remained at Madrid, participating in the various functions and festivities that adorned and characterized a gala occasion. On May 22 they left the Spanish Capital, followed by many expressions of friendship and popularity; and after a stay of two months in France and Switzerland returned home.

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CHAPTER XIX

LAST DAYS AND END

DURING this sojourn in Europe, Curry's health grew more impaired; and the attacks of his malady at times caused him much suffering. There seemed to be little, if any, improvement after his return home, in spite of the skilled treatment he had received, both in Europe and America, at the hands of eminent specialists. A man with less energy of will, or with a feebler aspiration for continued usefulness, might have been contented to relax his work under the burdens of pain and increasing age, and to await in quietude the inevitable end. But with unabated purpose he continued to keep his place in the front rank of those who sought to elevate and dignify the nation in which he had shown himself a leader. The educator once more took up his allotted task with an unfaltering spirit, and with an ever unsparing effort, that was accompanied and lightened by frequent expressions of appreciation which came to him from those who knew and recognized his distinguished service.

Before his departure for Madrid in April, he had participated in epoch making plans for the cause of education in the South and the nation; and these plans are indicated in an entry of his journal on February 27, 1902:—

Left for New York. Guest of W. H. Baldwin, Jr. We went to Mr. and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr.'s, to dinner.

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Present, Baldwin, Curry, Gates, Gilman, Ogden, Shaw, Page, Buttrick, and Edward M. Shepard as counsel. In the order named we signed our names to a paper defining the purpose of an Education Association, for which an incorporation was to be asked from Congress. An organization was effected, and Mr. Rockefeller, for his father, agreed to place $1,000,000 in the hands of the Association, to be used at the rate of $100,000 a year for education in the South.

Meeting harmonius, and every vote unanimous. We sat until after midnight.

On April 2 the following note was made in the journal:—

Left at 7:45 for New York. Trustees of General Education Board met at Mr. Jesup's at 4 P. M.

Very interesting meeting. Mr. J. D. Rockefeller placed $1,000,000 at our disposal to be used in ten years according to a "policy" we had adopted. Some appropriations were made; others offered on conditions.

Thus simply does Curry record the beginnings of the General Education Board, now everywhere known as perhaps the most powerful educational foundation in the world. Since that day fifty-one million dollars have been given to this Board by Mr. John D. Rockefeller, with a wisdom and sagacity seldom equalled by the great givers of our times. The income from this huge foundation has enabled the Board to enlarge its field of operation, until now it embraces the continent. It has chosen for its special province the work of strengthening higher education in the Republic; throughout the South, in addition, it seeks to promote public high schools through the State universities and the State departments of education, and to subserve elementary education by the im-

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provement of agricultural conditions and increasing the efficiency of rural life.

The fundamental idea of the Board is the stimulation to self-help of States, cities, and communities; and in pursuance of this idea it has directly and indirectly, under the thoughtful guidance of Frederick T. Gates and Wallace Buttrick, increased the permanent endowment of American colleges over twenty millions of dollars in the past five years; and its service to American education has just begun. In the language of Dr. C. A. Smith.

"The idea which moves this Board is not that of creating anything new, but of contributing to the efficiency of what already exists. Its desire is not to bolster up the weak, but to make the strong still stronger; not to choke off individual initiative, but to spur it on; not to make new institutions, but to encourage and assist those which have shown themselves useful to the people."

It was a great gratification to Curry, with the shadows of death falling across his path, to see the work of his life thus about to be carried forward by great agencies unimagined, when he emerged from the darkness and gloom of the lower South, smitten by the madness of reconstruction, to undertake his educational ministry. In 1905, upon a foundation of $100,000, given by Mr. Rockefeller and in accordance with an expressed wish of his, the Curry Memorial School of Education was established at the University of Virginia, and recently the General Education Board, in honor of one of its greatest pioneer members, has added $50,000 to the endowment of the School.

In July, 1902, shortly before Curry's return from abroad, a meeting of the Southern Education Board

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and of the General Education Board was held in New York City, at which was indicated a general movement in the direction of harmonizing the different large educational funds then in existence, without imposing intentional restrictions upon their independent use and efficiency.

The following items from the journal are introductory of what was done in this direction at a later period:—

September 29.—Arrived in New York at 1:30 P. M. Manly met us at station, but left at once for boat and Atlanta.

Gov. Porter travelled with us from Asheville to New York.

Mr. Simpkins made us a visit.

Dr. Fraser, at my request, travelled from Washington to Baltimore, as I wished a conference with him on education in Virginia.

September 30.—Dr. Wallace Buttrick, Mrs. Morehead, Mr. Simpkins and Dr. Booker T. Washington came to see us.

My health improves.

Dr. Buttrick showed me a highly complimentary letter from Mr. John D. Rockefeller, who stands behind our General Education Board, expressing surprise and gratification at the success and hopefulness of the work. . . .

Wednesday, October 1.—Busy day from 9 to 5. Peabody Board met at noon. Important conferences preceding. Re-elected General Agent, *nem. con.* A Secretary, salary of $2,000, authorized on motion, with commendatory remarks, of J. P. Morgan.

On my recommendation, two committees were appointed; one, on needs of Normal College; the other, on co-operation with "General Education Board."

I did not attend the usual banquet. . . .

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Thursday, October 2.—Meeting, in my room, of Committee on College; Gilman, Hoar, Porter, Hoke Smith. Gov. Porter, in saying goodbye tearfully, said his injunction was to take good care of myself for next five weeks. The College never so much needed me. Its success depended on it; and his work would be a failure without me.

Left at 4 P. M.

Curry's high estimate of Governor Porter, and of his relation to the Peabody Normal College and the cause of education, is worthy of being recorded here:—

Governor Porter, who gave wise counsel and intelligent and influential support to Dr. Sears in his incipient proposition to ally the Peabody Board with the State in the establishment of the College, should be memorialized by monument and the gratitude of teachers as the man who rendered most efficient and invaluable aid.

Following the entry of October 2 in the journal is this brief and significant one:—

October 3.—Asheville in afternoon.

Relapse, and very sick.

This attack seems to have been ominous; and was indicative of his now rapidly waning vitality. He made no record in his journal, as he usually did, of this meeting of the Peabody Board; but contented himself with preserving in his scrap-book a newspaper clipping, which gave an account of it.

The Trustees of the Peabody Fund met yesterday in the Fifth Avenue Hotel at noon, and elected officers for the ensuing year, and received the reports of Dr. J. L. M. Curry, General Agent, and of J. Pierpont Morgan, Treasurer. Bishop William Croswell Doane of Albany was elected a member of the Board to succeed the late Bishop Whipple of Minnesota, and Morris K. Jesup to succeed

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the late ex-Senator William M. Evarts. It was voted that at the call of the Chairman, Chief Justice Fuller, and the executive committees, a special meeting might be held in Washington in January to consider taking steps to bring the work of the Peabody Fund, the Slater Fund and the General Education Fund into greater harmony. No merging of management is contemplated, but it is desired to avoid duplication of work. Acting upon a motion made by Senator Hoar last year, an advisory board was elected for the Peaboby Normal College at Nashville. W. A. Berry, W. H. McAllister, John M. Gannt and Willis Bonner, all of Tennessee, were elected. Dr. Curry in his report reviewed the work of the last twenty years of the Fund. It was voted that he be empowered to choose an assistant. The income of the Fund, amounting to $80,000, was distributed among the scholarships and institutes in various States on last year's basis. Governor James D. Porter, the President of the Normal College; Dr. Curry, the General Agent; Dr. S. A. Green, the Secretary; and J. P. Morgan, the Treasurer, together with the standing committees, were re-elected. Those present were Samuel A. Green, J. L. M. Curry, James D. Porter, J. Pierpont Morgan, Chief Justice Fuller, Henderson M. Somerville, Daniel C. Gilman, George Peabody Wetmore, George F. Boar, and Hoke Smith. There was a dinner in the evening for the members and their guests.

By November, Curry's general health appears to have improved; and early in December he visited Nashville, and with Dean Russell, of the New York Teachers College, addressed the Peabody Normal College, leaving that afternoon for Asheville.

The Nashville *American* of December 6th gave the following account of this visit:—

No event has recently occurred in connection with the Peabody College which has been of more interest to the

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College, its faculty, and the student body, than the recent visit of Dr. J. L. M. Curry, General Agent of the Peabody Board; Dr. James E. Russell, Dean of the Teachers' College of New York, and Dr. Wallace Buttrick, Secretary of the General Education Board of New York. At a meeting of the faculty of the Peabody College, held Thursday, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

"Be it resolved, that the faculty of the Peabody College for Teachers express its special thankfulness for the recent visit of Dr. J. L. M. Curry, and that we assure him of a gratitude we cannot put in words for the interest and help he has given this institution. Our sympathy goes out to him in this time of suffering, along with a pleading to the Father that he may be restored to his wonted vigor. His service to his generation has been mighty; may he be spared to crown a life, already rich toward God, with even greater achievements for the people he has loved with all his soul. His coming to us is the coming of a father; his welcome will ever be the welcome of a father.

"Be it resolved, that the faculty of the Peabody College for Teachers thank Dr. James E. Russell and Dr. Wallace Buttrick for their recent visit, and assure them of the service this visit yielded to the students, to the faculty, and to the institution as a whole. We extend to them our wishes for the prosperity of the great enterprise they are directing, with the hope that their duties will permit them to come to us frequently. For them our College household cherishes a warm welcome."

The kindly and gentle spirit of these resolves suggest the intimation that their adopters perceived the waves of life to be ebbing with the man, whose career had so closely touched that of the institution they represented. The resolutions are words of farewell.

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Following the Peabody Board's meeting in October, and the visit to Nashville early in December, the brief entries in the journal, with the more frequent blanks and hiatuses, tell a pathetic story of protracted relapses, of severe surgical operations and of great sufferings. But the invincible courage remained still victorious, and the fading eyes continued to look forward with unabated hope. A sense of this stalwart and unyielding spirit is inevitably kindled by the perusal of the pages of the diary of 1902, with their brief jottings of a series of business appointments, running into the New Year.

In the meantime, letters of sympathy and encouragement and admiration were coming to him from many of the most distinguished of his friends and contemporaries, at home and abroad, not only in the educational world, but also in the world of politics and letters. Of themselves, they mark the conspicuous and approved position that Curry had achieved; and if space permitted their publication here, they would serve to adorn the pages which seek to chronicle his career.

One writes, "It is a matter of much rejoicing to us to see the fruition of the earnest seed-sowing that you have done these many years in the South;" another, "I hope that no temporary discouragement as to the condition of your health will induce you to think of leaving the great work of managing the Peabody and Slater funds, which have been for so many years the great sheet anchor of education in the South;" another, "It is the pride and solace of those who cherish your name and fame that they will be associated with great movements for the

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blessing of so many;" and so the record might be almost indefinitely multiplied.

After a critical illness of two weeks, the end came at 11:20 o'clock, Thursday night, February 12, 1903, at the house of his brother-in-law, Colonel John A. Connally, near Asheville, North Carolina. Mrs. Curry, whose ill health had shortly before taken her to Philadelphia for medical treatment, returned to Asheville when her husband grew worse; and she was by his bedside when he died.

His wish that his mortal body might repose at Richmond, and be borne to its last resting-place from the halls of Richmond College, was faithfully regarded; and there gathered many of the foremost men of the nation to bear testimony to his worth.

"On the heights of Hollywood, overlooking the running river, his grave was made," writes a sympathetic friend. "Not far away is the grave of Dr. Jeter, for many years his friend and contemporary. Hard by is the grave of H. H. Harris, whom he loved with surpassing tenderness. In the same neighborhood sleeps the dust of William D. Thomas, his brother-in-law. These, with scores of their friends and brethren in Christ, await His coming."

The names in this paragraph are of those who were very near to him in affection and in the creed that he professed. Others yet, whose names and fames are linked with the larger country, sleep about him in the Valhalla of the South.

The shock and strain of the great separation brought his devoted wife to his side within three short months, during which her thoughts had dwelt constantly upon the perpetuation of his work and his

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fame. Upon the memorial stone marking their common resting place is graven this triumphant promise:—

They that wonder shall
Reign, and they that
Reign shall rest.

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CHAPTER XX

FRIENDS AND ASSOCIATES

CURRY'S life, passing the period named by the Psalmist, covered a time of amazing development, during which his own country advanced to the front rank among nations and the world about him was made over, before his eyes, in political machinery, economic method, scientific power and social purpose. Born in the administration of John Quincy Adams, and while Thomas Jefferson still lived and was launching the last darling project of his heart—the University of Virginia—he held his latest commission in the public service from Theodore Roosevelt. His career was contemporaneous with those of many of the most distinguished men and women in the history of his country; and his associations with a large number of these men and women were more than casual. His visits abroad, and his services as a diplomat, afforded him the opportunity of knowing many of the first personages of his generation in the political, literary and social life of the old world; and his journals abound with references to these friends and acquaintances.

Frequent mention has been made in the preceding pages of his admiration for Calhoun. No man exercised a more potent influence upon his younger life, in directing his adoption of the political theories and principles of the Federal Government, than did the

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great South Carolinian; and no man ever, throughout his career, more nearly measured up to his conception of the ideal statesman. Curry's meeting with Calhoun,—the one entering, the other nearing the close of his public career,—on the occasion of the former's return home from Harvard in 1845, has already been detailed in a former chapter. Throughout his political experiences in Alabama, and during his service in Congress, the younger man remained an avowed follower of the elder; and into his later years of a broader and more chastened experience, he kept the master's faith, and ranked Calhoun with the most intellectual of the world's political philosophers.

Frequent reminiscences of the War between the States, and of the Southern leaders, have appeared in earlier pages of this book. The following extracts contain allusions to four of the most unique figures in the armies of the South,—General Cockrell, less well-known than the other three; General Pat Cleburne, whose fame the poet, Ticknor, has blazoned in one of the most stirring of Southern war lyrics; General Leonidas Polk, who fashioned his bishop's crozier into a sword-blade in defense of his country; and the partisan leader, Colonel John S. Mosby, whose "Confederacy" was, for a long period of the war, maintained in the enemy's country with an unsurpassed and famous gallantry.

"Near New Hope," writes Curry, "occurred one of the most brilliant sorties of the campaign. Some of the Union forces made a desperate and bold effort to break through our right. They were met by as gallant a defence as soldiers ever made. The Confederates under Cleburne, Cockrell and others, displayed heroic courage; and when

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the attacking party withdrew, the ground was so covered with dead and disabled that one could have traversed it by walking on bodies. I never saw on battle field such havoc and destruction of human life. Cockrell, now Senator from Missouri, brave as Julius Caesar, tender-hearted as a woman, never appears to greater advantage than when, in the midst of peril, he leads those who worship him to combat and victory. Cleburne, of Irish parentage, was a born captain, and like Jackson and Forrest and Semmes and Gordon, was conspicuous for generalship which seems to have come from instinct, or to have been heaven-endowed. In my old Congressional district, a county, cut off from Randolph and Calhoun, through which the Southern Railway passes, keeps alive the name and fame of Cleburne."

"In March (1864) I went to Demopolis, at the request of Gen. Leonidas Polk, a bishop of the Episcopal Church, who had resigned his clerical position in order to serve the Confederacy in the field. A grand review of 20,000 troops took place, and I had the honor of addressing acres of soldiers. . . .

"It was near Marietta that our army was thrown into deep grief by the untimely death of Gen. Polk, who exposing himself too long while making an observation, was struck by a shell and killed suddenly. His piety, devotion to his church, fervent patriotism and soldierly qualities endeared him to army and people, and gave our cause the prestige of his striking personality."

"December 4, 1866.—Left Washington City in company with Dr. Plummer. Met Col. Mosby, the famous partisan leader, on the cars. Pointed out many places of historic interest. A modest, unassuming, intelligent gentleman."

Among Curry's papers is the following about "Stonewall" Jackson:—

Gen. T. J. Jackson is more universally loved in the Confederacy than any other officer except Lee. His marvel-

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lous achievements were the result of extraordinary military genius. Col. Henderson, in his "Life of Jackson," the best book written on the War, writing not as a partisan but as an unprejudiced military critic,—a Jomini or Napier,—ascribes to him the highest qualities as a captain. For years prior to the War he had been a professor in the Virginia Military Institute; but he had little aptness to teach; and his piety and courage did not shield him from adverse criticism as a teacher. On 20 May, 1875, I made a call on Gov. Kemper; and in the course of the evening he said that in 1857, when a member of the Board of Visitors of the Virginia Military Institute, one of the professors appeared before that body with two hundred cadets, and in a formal manner demanded the removal of Col. Jackson from his professorship for "intellectual incompetency." The demand was fortunately not acceded to, and the professor continued in the discharge of his collegiate duties until the war occurred, when he promptly offered his services as a soldier.

Mention has heretofore been made of Horace Greeley's complimentary allusion in *The Tribune* to Curry's first speech in Congress. Under date of Sunday, August 6, 1871, occurs the following note in the diary:—

Preached at 11:30 A. M. at Madison Avenue Baptist Church (New York). Administered the Lord's Supper in morning. Horace Greeley was present in the morning, and soundly slept.

Curry's acquaintances among famous Englishmen were numerous. His meetings with Matthew Arnold, Joseph Chamberlain, Goldwin Smith, and others have been already mentioned. In a newspaper clipping preserved by him, and contributed by him to the *Religious Herald*, he writes of Arnold:—

Matthew Arnold was also once in Richmond for a few

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days. As he brought a letter of introduction to me from the Hon. Robert C. Winthrop, it was my privilege to show him some attention and enjoy his companionship. In a carriage we visited objects of historic, civil and social interest, and talked over many subjects, for he was inquisitive rather than communicative. As he had been school inspector in England, and was the son of a great schoolmaster, our schools much interested him. He did not impress me as a sound observer, for he generalized hastily as to people and institutions from narrow data. Archbishop Tait, of Canterbury, whose life is interesting and instructive, said: "I despair of knowing anything for certain of the real life of any people without living long amongst them." How much we have suffered at the South from the hasty conclusions of Pullman-car observers! Mr. Arnold lectured at night in Mozart Hall. He read closely, and excited some adverse comments, for many of us had read the lecture, which had previously appeared in an English magazine, and in "Littell." The offence to our provincialism was somewhat softened when we learned that a few nights before a Boston audience had been served with the same "cold soup."

Other desultory notes of his chance associations with, or reminiscences of Dean Stanley, Beresford Hope, Charles Stewart Parnell, Bright, Gladstone, Mr. Bryce, and Spurgeon, are found in his journals and note books.

In 1875 I heard Dean Stanley, in Westminster, preach a funeral discourse on Bishop Thirlwall, and witnessed the burial.

On 5 October, 1875, I dined at Col. Archer Anderson's with the Dean. Low in stature, wore knee-pants, low-quartered shoes with silver buckles, "shad-bellied" coat; had the usual English mutton-chop whiskers; had on the medal of the Deanery of Westminster, a circular gold

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piece, with three crowns, shamrock and thistle.—Quiet, unostentatious, pleasant; did not smoke. Pleased with references to his books, and by allusions to him in "Tom Brown at Rugby."—Said Dr. Arnold ruled more by "awe" than by law. In after life, became rather intimate; but could never quite overcome his fear. Rather shocked once, when Bunsen, in earnest conversation, slapped Arnold on the knees. Contrasted Grant and Dom Pedro of Brazil, rather unfavorably as to Grant, showing he did not know the great general. He called Bishop Ellicott "Charles," and Trevelyan "George;" said Macaulay attended worship, and was an ordinarily "religious" man.

The Dean had an unusually large acquaintance and friendship outside of the clergy, and was especially a favorite with Americans. In his ecclesiastical opinions, he was rather a combination of Broad Church and Liberal, and hence drew upon himself the "reptilian criticism" of some Ritualistic newspapers. His "Christian Institutions" frankly conceded that primitive baptism was by immersion; and when the statue of John Bunyan, the "immortal Baptist tinker," and author of "Pilgrim's Progress" was unveiled, by a natural fitness of things he made a delightful address. A churchly paper, in commenting on the event, with vitriolic malice said that when the statue of the Devil was finished, the fittest person to unveil it would be the Dean of Westminster.

His handwriting was undecipherable; and answers to invitations to dinner were sometimes returned, that the hostess might ascertain whether there was an acceptance or declination.

In April, 1876, returning home after nearly a year's absence in Europe, Asia and Africa, I tarried for a season in London, and in the Lake District in England. Having a letter of introduction from the Governor of Virginia, which had been previously presented, I accepted an invitation to breakfast from Beresford Hope, then representing Cambridge University in the British Parliament. At the

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table were Lady Hope, somewhat of an invalid, and who, as the sister of Lord Salisbury, had a title in which her husband did not share; several daughters, one of whom was to be married the following week; and a son, a student at Cambridge, who was in a state of great excitement because of a boat-race to occur that day on the Thames between the crews of Oxford and Cambridge.

Mr. Hope, a stout, near-sighted, old English gentleman, received me courteously and cordially. The breakfast was such as is usual in English families. What was singular, no servant appeared at the table, although several liveried men were quite obsequious in opening doors, taking hats, wrappings, etc. Host and daughters served the coffee, but the substantial food was on a side-table, and each person was expected to get whatever was needed or desired.

Through Mr. Hope's kindness, I secured a seat in the House of Commons, where for several hours I witnessed the proceedings and heard the debates. . . . Mr. Hope was a politician, having entered Parliament in 1841, and an author, having written a number of pamphlets and books. Possessing great wealth, he published the well-known *Saturday Review*, a periodical of much smartness, which gave a substantial aid to young and needy writers, some of whom became distinguished. Among these were Salisbury; Sir William Vernon Harcourt, the great Liberal leader; Morley, the chosen biographer of Gladstone; and Stephen, a well-known English judge and writer of law-books.

Among Mr. Hope's contributions to literature were pamphlets and books on the American War. He was an ardent friend of the South in that struggle, and was chiefly instrumental in having erected the bronze statue of Stonewall Jackson, which is in the Capitol Square of Richmond.

The following entry in the journal was made at Richmond, under date of February 6, 1880:—

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Went to Mozart Hall and heard Hon. Charles Parnell, M. P., and Mr. Dillon, two Irish agitators, discuss the famine in Ireland, and as the cause thereof, the land-tenure. Facts interesting, badly presented.

Of an evening spent with John Bright, he records this impression:—

In the House of Commons I once heard a short speech from John Bright, the Quaker Commoner. He had a clear, musical voice, commanded most respectful attention, and his manner of speech was earnest and forcible, and wholly free from that halting, stammering utterance, which so many English speakers and talkers affect. In 1886 during the Queen's Jubliee, I was in England, and was invited to dinner by our Minister, the Hon. E. J. Phelps. About twenty persons were present, some of great distinction, whose names and faces I should have been glad to know; but because of the stupid prevalent custom of non-introduction, I was presented to only one guest, and he was Mr. Bright, who sat between Murat Halstead and myself. He was very reticent; seemed absent-minded or absorbed in his own thoughts, and inclined me to suspect that his defection from Mr. Gladstone and alliance with the Conservatives on the Home Rule question was due, as the Liberals charged, to a loss of that vivacious, springy intellect which had previously made him such a strong debater. During the evening, inquiring whether I was an American, he said: "Your country is a very remarkable one;" and added the inquiry, "To what do you attribute its greatness?" My reply was: "That is a very difficult question. To answer it properly would require a volume; but I would mention a few causes which lie on the surface." I suggested, absence of neighbors; immense areas of fertile land; energy of free institutions; freedom of trade among the States; Home Rule, or local self-government; and absolute religious liberty. When Home Rule was instanced, he shrugged his shoulders; but evinced pleasure when I speci-

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fied the inter-State free-trade, and soul liberty. On the last he made an emphatic comment of approval, and gave us credit for our superiority, in that respect, over all other nations.

It has been noted on an earlier page, that in 1890, Curry had met in Richmond, the distinguished English statesman and author, whose great work, "The American Commonwealth," is a classic exhibition of knowledge of a foreign country's institutions, achieved by an alien. Late in life, Curry wrote of Mr. Bryce as follows:—

"Apropos of the veto-power, I once related to Mr. Bryce the conversation" (heretofore detailed) "with Mr. Chamberlain; and he inquired whether such an arbitrary, one-man power did not, because of its inconsistency with our form of government, make the Executive who used it unpopular. On the contrary, I told him, it had had no such effect. Generally, except in Mr. Cleveland's vetoes of Pension Bills, the Congress and the people approved. To an inquiry as to the principal arguments in favor of the retention of such a power, I referred to the effort made by Mr. Clay and the Whig party in 1842 to modify or restrain the exercise, and its decisive defeat, brought about largely by Mr. Calhoun's unanswerable argument. 'Did you ever read that speech?' I asked. He had never heard of it. I begged him to read it, saying that when he finished, he would write after it, Q. E. D."

"In a delightful interview with Mr. Gladstone in London, in 1887, in company with Dr. Aubery, the author of the excellent 'History of the English People,' I ventured to suggest a visit to America, the enthusiastic welcome he would receive, and the general gratification of his 'Kin Beyond the Sea,' had given our people. He replied that he was too old and too busy to cross the ocean; but he had a young friend, Mr. Bryce, who had three times

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crossed the ocean for the study of the people and the institutions of our great country, and his book would be worthy of the subject. 'The American Commonwealth' has more than fulfilled that prediction; and, because later and written by an Englishman, is superior to De Tocqueville."

One wishes for a more vivid picture of Gladstone from Curry, his presence, manner, speech. He greatly admired the great Englishman and wrote a sketch of him, but the critical impulse was not strong in Curry. His forte was not analysis and delineation and subtle portrayal, but exhortation and persuasion.

It has been stated in a former chapter that, in the July of 1867, Curry, then on his first European tour, heard Spurgeon preach in London; and that in the following October he heard him again and made his acquaintance. Of the first occasion when he listened to him, he made a note ten days later.

At 6 P. M.,—night, as it is called, although the sun was two hours high, I went to the tabernacle to hear Spurgeon. In the morning I had been informed that he was "out of town." In the evening I determined to ascertain for myself, and was unfortunately too late for the introductory services. Just as I entered the spacious tabernacle,—a large room with three circular galleries, which were densely packed, every available foot being occupied by sitter or stander,—I heard a clear, distinct voice reading a hymn. . . . The whole congregation, at least five thousand, joined in singing, using the familiar tune of "Ortonville." Then came a fervent prayer. Afterwards followed the sermon, about thirty-five minutes in length. There is no pulpit in the building. The preacher stood in the first gallery; and, after reading his text, leaned against the railing. His text was Luke VII, 41, 42. Without pre-

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liminary remark, except a brief ejaculatory prayer for the Spirit's help, he stated the division. . . . There was nothing very striking or original in the discourse; and yet he commanded the undivided attention of the whole multitude. If the sermon I heard be a fair specimen of thought and delivery (and I think it was not), I have heard fifty preachers in the United States, who, as mere pulpit orators, are superior to him. Dr. Fuller is unapproachably ahead of him. Was I, then, disappointed? And in what consists his power?

So many accounts had been received from those who had heard him, that I was not much disappointed. The secret of his power is not a unit. It is manifold. He has a voice, wonderful not so much for its strength as for its clearness and distinctness. Directly opposite to him, and in a remote part of the building, I caught every syllable. His utterance is neither slow nor rapid. A reporter, I should judge, could easily take down his words. He is a man of earnestness, enthusiasm, prayer, faith. His preaching is practical, pointed, personal and scriptural. He loves Jesus. He talks about Jesus. He knows no other name as the foundation of a sinner's hope, than Jesus. . . . With a vein of humor in his composition, he often excites a smile;—never boisterous or irreverent laughter. The philosophy of his success is, an earnest and believing proclamation of the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ.

In the following October, after hearing Spurgeon again, and making his acquaintance, Curry wrote in a letter to the *Religious Herald*, under the caption of "A Sunday in London," a further account of the English preacher.

. . . The house was crowded. . . . Spurgeon preached. It was his first sermon for four weeks, as he had been sick. I never saw a more attentive congregation. I

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have seen people more wrought upon by human speech, but every eye was fixed and every mind comprehended. The sermon was a direct, earnest, practical enforcement of Scriptural truth.

Spurgeon is now a recognized fact—an acknowledged influence—a felt power. He has been sneered at, written at, ridiculed, misrepresented, slandered; but still there is no wane in his popularity or success, nor any change of tactics, nor any cessation of aggressive effort. . . . Strictly and rhetorically speaking, Spurgeon is not an orator. A score of men could be mentioned who are his superiors as a mere speaker. His strength is not in his oratorical abilities. Of course he is not deficient in these respects. His person is not commanding. His voice is not particularly mellifluous. His gesticulation is ordinary, and he is not, in my judgment, pre-eminent for logic or eloquence. How then has Charles Haddon Spurgeon, at the age of 33, become in the estimation of so many, the prince of living preachers?

His voice is clear and his articulation almost perfect. His language is strong, vigorous Saxon; his style easy and flowing, and at the same time terse and condensed. His method is natural, perspicuous, orderly; and the most uncultivated can remember his divisions. He has a marvellous fecundity and appositeness of illustration, and his figures and images, like the caryatides in architecture, give both strength and ornament to his discourse. . . . He has entire command of his resources, his voice and emotions; and his speaking never descends to mere declamation. But his power lies back of all these auxiliaries. He is a man of earnestness, sincerity, piety, prayer, faith, and full of the Holy Spirit. He is a consecrated man. His heart is in the ministry. His soul is afire with the love of God, and zeal for perishing sinners. He preaches, more than any one I ever heard, right at each individual hearer, and he preaches Jesus Christ and Him alone as the Saviour of sinners.

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In April of 1876 he wrote in his journal about Spurgeon:—

I now purpose an account of a Sunday in London, with some thoughts suggested by the worship and the preachers.

Of course, Spurgeon was my first choice. I have an invariable rule to hear J. A. B. (John A. Broadus) once on a Sabbath if I am where he preaches; and a similar rule might be adopted, with like results, if one is where Spurgeon preaches.

Curry's reminiscences of the great English religious exhorter may be concluded with an extract from one of his contributions in March, 1892, to the *Religious Herald:*—

The numerous announcements of publications relating to Spurgeon and his extraordinary career, and the eager haste with which compilers and publishers are seeking to get before the public, are the proof of the anxiety with which everything authentic pertaining to the great preacher is read. Some one, in giving an account of a memorial meeting, ascribed to me an intimacy with him, which I had not the honor to possess. It was my privilege to hear him preach a number of times from 1867 onwards; to get an occasional letter from him; and to enjoy a brief companionship at his home and under his roof. It so happens that a letter, written to one of my children in 1875, lies before me, and in it an account is given of a Sunday in London, when I heard Liddon, Parker and Spurgeon.

This paragraph is followed by an account, substantially similar to that given above, of his estimate of Spurgeon's methods and abilities; and of a visit to the preacher's home. It is clear that the great

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preacher interested him and stirred his critical faculties more than the statesmen and lawgivers.

Turning now to others with whom Curry was more intimately acquainted, we find in his *memorabilia*, further reminiscences than those already given, of Joseph LeConte, Benjamin Hill, Linton and Alexander H. Stephens, William L. Yancey, Sergeant S. Prentiss, Howell Cobb, Robert Toombs and Judah P. Benjamin.

First, of LeConte, who in his "Autobiography" tells of the college career of himself and his brother, Lewis, but seems to make no mention by name of any other of his classmates or college mates:—

As LeConte became the most distinguished of all my fellow collegians, as an author and a scientist, it may be of interest to state that he and his brother, natives of Liberty County (Georgia) which gave more students to the College than any other County except Clarke, were classmates and room-mates. Both were noted for their unblemished purity of morals, courtesy of demeanor, studious habits and general popularity. Lewis had much native talent in drawing and sculpture. "Joe," as he was called, played on the flute exquisitely; and while his class-standing was fair, he gave no special promise of the distinction in science he subsequently attained,—no prophecy of the exalted place he won and merited in the scientific and literary world. These adjectives do not convey a proper idea of his many-sidedness; for geology, biology, optics, philosophy, theology and education enjoyed his attention. His orthodox views on Evolution and the Bible gave comfort to many pious people who feared that modern science was undermining their faith. He demonstrated the consistency of science and religion, and retained unwaveringly his connection with the Presbyterian Church and his profession of personal faith in Christ.

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Of Benjamin H. Hill, the great Georgian, Curry says:—

Ben Hill was a fellow-student of the class of 1844, and he was brilliant and popular, and gave promise of that remarkable ability which made him a conspicuous debater in the council-halls of the country, and his early death an irreparable calamity to his beloved South.

As has been heretofore recorded, he first met Alexander H. Stephens during his college days at Athens.

"It has been my good fortune," he wrote in an article in the Atlanta *Constitution* in 1899, "to have seen and heard many distinguished Georgians, and with not a few I have enjoyed relations of intimacy or friendship. A long catalogue comes to my memory, embracing Bartow, Law, Lawton, the Jacksons, the Crawfords, the Cobbs, Nesbit, Murray, Jenkins, the Stephenses, Dougherty, Hillyer, Well, Tucker, Pierce, Haygood, Iverson, the Colquitts, Hall, Hill, Barnett, Grady, Berrien, Johnson, Brown and others. . . .

When a small boy in my native country of Lincoln, I was present at a session of the Superior Court over which William H. Crawford presided, and at which were present such attorneys as Joseph Henry Lumpkin, Francis Cone, Robert Toombs and Andrew J. Miller. . . . At subsequent courts Alexander H. Stephens attended. The physical man was in marked contrast to the intellectual; for there was scarcely flesh enough on his bones to cover his brilliant genius. Tall, cadaverous, apparently bloodless, weighing about a hundred pounds, he was capable at the bar, on the stump, in legislative halls, of as much work as the most athletic and robust. In the years 1839-1843, I saw him several times in Athens. . . . Going one day into Linton's room in the "old college" building, I was introduced to "Brother Aleck," who was lying on the bed,

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and most unprepossessing, except as his eyes shone with unusual lustre. . . . From that day until his death, while he was in Federal and Confederate Congresses, Vice-president of the Confederacy and Governor of Georgia, I saw him often, and because of association and friendship with Linton, he treated me with much consideration and kindness.

He was a ready and able debater, quick at repartee, careful in preparation of his speeches, clear and logical in the presentation of his arguments, and at times impassioned and eloquent. His articulation was distinct; and frequently his voice assumed an upward and downward intonation, a semi-musical swell and fall, acquired probably from much speaking in the open air. In the House of Representatives at Washington, where few were listened to, he always commanded undivided attention; and once, during his speech on the admission of Oregon as a State into the Union, the applause, begun on the floor, was taken up by the galleries and continued, until it amounted to an ovation.

. . . . The mind of Mr. Stephens was fruitful of suggestions; his opinions, matured by experience and profound study, were conservative; his heart was hopeful. . . . . Social in his nature, loving human companionship, fond of talking, he was a coveted guest at many homes.

He adds of Stephens, in his journal:—

On 20th April, 1874, Mr. Stephens was in Richmond, and was very feeble,—little more than a walking skeleton. His intellect was undimmed; his eye sparkled like a big diamond; and his conversation was interesting and instructive. Once when I called, I found Governors Wise and Kemper with him; and he gave a graphic account of the visit of the Confederate Commissioners to Gen. Grant; of the General's honesty, patriotism and ability, he expressed himself in warm and eulogistic terms.

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S. S. Prentiss, William L. Yancey and Wendell Phillips profoundly captivated and impressed him. Of Prentiss he wrote in 1877:—

Prior to the Whig nomination (in 1844), I heard S. S. Prentiss of Mississippi, one of the most eloquent men in America, make a speech to a packed audience in Faneuil Hall. It was one of the most thrilling specimens of platform oratory I ever listened to, and he carried his audience at pleasure.

Writing in 1890, in the *Religious Herald,* some "Reminiscences of the Early Days of the Anti-Slavery Movement," he says of Wendell Phillips, the great abolitionist agitator:—

To have heard Phillips forty-five years ago was a partial education for a young student. He, S. S. Prentiss, and W. L. Yancey, were the great orators of this country.

His admiration of the stirring eloquence and extraordinary oratorical gifts of Prentiss and of Yancey never waned; and in his latter years he confirmed his earlier judgment of them in this statement:—

I have been very often asked who was the greatest orator I ever heard. . . . Speaking is so various, that it can not be classified. Some is compact, some diffusive; some sober, some humorous; some logical, some rhetorical; some argumentative, some didactic; some dry, some very entertaining. Oratory and eloquence are by no means identical. My definition of oratory would be, "Let us go and fight Philip." This requires a great occasion, a crisis, the suspension of human interests on a single hour, on an overshadowing, imperative issue. Demosthenes, Mirabeau and Henry were orators. It has been my privilege to hear Canovas, Sagasta, Moret and Castelar in Spain; Gambetta in France; Balfour, Fawcett, D'Israeli, Bright

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and Gladstone in England; Choate, Webster, Phillips, Douglas, Benjamin, Bowden, Corwin, Seward, McDuffie and others in the United States, They differed widely. Each had his excellencies; but as orators taking captive unwilling audiences, holding in possession emotions, convictions, will, person and property,—driving to conclusions which surrendered everything to the speaker,—those who in my judgment were the greatest were S. S. Prentiss and William L. Yancey,—one a native of Maine, the other of South Carolina.

Curry never failed to express his admiration of Yancey; and he records his having, when an elector on the Buchanan ticket, dined with the great orator at the meeting of the electoral college at Montgomery. Another note of his about Yancey is that the latter said to him, by way of advice, when he was a law-student: "Young man, if you wish to succeed at the bar, learn to think on your legs,"—a more valuable, if more difficult lesson to learn than that of the famous orator and wit, Tom Corwin, of Ohio, who advised a young disciple of Blackstone, inquiring the road to success: "Be solemn, young man! Be solemn as an ass!"

Among the distinguished Georgians who were Curry's friends, he often spoke and wrote of Robert Toombs and Howell Cobb. Associating Toombs and Alexander H. Stephens, he said:—

> Perhaps no two public men occupying distinguished positions in our country ever sustained a longer and closer intimacy than Stephens and Robert Toombs. Born in adjoining counties, educated at the same college, practising law in the same courts, they were as Damon and Pythias. . . . . Physically they were antipodes; Stephens, delicate, with yellow complexion, frail body, his survival

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amid severe labors, physical weaknesses, a sword-thrust and the fall of a gate upon him, seemed a miracle; Toombs, robust, vigorous, boisterous, aggressive, a Boanerges, was the impersonation of health.

I saw Toombs for the first time in attendance upon the Superior Court of Lincoln County. . . . He was then about twenty-five years of age, and was a model of manly beauty. From that time until his death I saw him frequently, and never received anything at his hands except generous hospitality, marked courtesy and flattering regard. . . . By a sort of logical and political fitness of things, he became the first Secretary of State of the Confederacy. President Davis and he were not built on the same pattern, and friction was inevitable. Restive as a subordinate of the President, and impatient for service in another field, he entered the army, where for reasons not desirable to be stated, he did not add to his reputation nor achieve any military renown. With gifts rarely surpassed, he reached the art of seizing the genius and tendency of a critical epoch. His ability was perhaps more destructive than constructive. During the French Revolution some men were called "architects of ruin." I recall a dramatic incident in a secret session of the Provisional Congress, held in the Hall of the House of Deputies in the Capitol at Richmond, when the success of the Confederacy was under consideration, and foreign succor, financial schemes, and other expedients were under discussion. After a warm debate, General Toombs took the floor, and in less than an hour delivered one of the most powerful speeches I ever listened to, on our available means of safety. Every deputy sat with concentrated and rapt attention, amazed at the extraordinary ability of the man, and surprised and delighted at the seemingly wise and adequate scheme which was presented for our triumph. When he closed, there was silence, almost painful, for a considerable time in the body, when Mr. Robert H. Smith of Mobile arose and said: "Mr. President, if the gentleman from Georgia does not

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bring in bills to carry out what he has suggested, he is a worse traitor than Benedict Arnold." The idea of Mr. Smith was that no one comprehended the situation as did General Toombs, and on no other person did the obligation rest as heavily for devising and framing the adequate legislation.

In 1859–1860, while a representative in the United States Congress, Curry dined frequently at the home of General Cobb, in Washington, who was then Secretary of the Treasury, and whose wife, a Lamar, was a relative of Curry's. The latter knew Cobb at the University of Georgia, having first met him there when he came to deliver political speeches before the local club.

"Howell Cobb," he says, "was a remarkable man,—not so scholarly as his younger brother, T. R. R., nor so studious or diligent as Stephens or Toombs, but with quicker intellect and readier faculty of adaptation, because of resources on unexpected occasions, and of what some writers call the genius of common sense. Inclined to corpulency, good-humored, amiable, cordial in manner and disposition, with a genial nature giving sway over equals, practical rather than theoretical, he was a devoted husband, and affectionate father, a generous friend, and emphatically a people's man."

Not the least in Curry's opinion, of this group of Southern statesmen, was Judah P. Benjamin. In a series of "Recollections of Great Southerners," published in the Atlanta *Constitution* a few years before his death, and from which the foregoing extracts about Toombs and Howell Cobb are taken, Curry says of Benjamin:—

His parents were English Jews, who on their way to America landed in one of the West Indies, where Judah

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was born. His early boyhood was spent in North Carolina; but removing to New Orleans he was called to the bar in 1832, and won high respect as a lawyer and advocate. In 1857 I made his acquaintance, when he was a Senator with Slidell, of *Trent* memory, as his colleague. He was a low, stout, genial, smiling man, of decided Jewish cast, with bright, black eyes, and all the grace and suavity of a polished Frenchman, looking as if he never had a trouble. To me he was one of the most attractive and fascinating men I ever met in public life. While Senator, he not infrequently appeared before the Supreme Court; and when he was to argue a case, there was as much anxiety to hear him as there is now to hear Joseph Choate or James C. Carter. In the Senate, where were such men as Douglas, Green, Sumner, Pugh, he had no superior as a debater. One of his best known speeches, which during its delivery filled the galleries, and nearly emptied the House of Representatives, was in reply to Seward, and in vindication of Judge Taney and the Dred Scott decision. The exposure of the sophistry and misrepresentation of the New York Senator was something terrible; and yet after the numerous and cordial congratulations were over, the New Yorker, who had listened with stolid composure to the merciless castigation and exposure, approached Benjamin and shook hands with him. Years afterwards I asked Benjamin what Seward had the cheek to say, so calmly, after the argument; and was told that after some pleasant compliment about the ability of the speech, Seward took mild exception to some statement as to his position. Another great speech, a powerful defence of State-rights, heard with admiration by Sir G. C. Lewis of England, was made in the Senate on the 31st of December, 1860. Benjamin was collected and self-possessed in debate, had a voice as musical as the chimes of silver bells, a memory like Macaulay's, used no notes, and while earnest in manner and delivery, seemed as fresh at the close of a discourse as when he uttered the first sentence. His versatility and his

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capacity for work were immense, and he turned from one subject or duty to another with such facility and cleverness that he seemed to have no special aptitudes or preferences.

Benjamin's interesting career is known to the English-speaking world. A citizen, successively, of three governments, he was renowned under all. "The little Jew has stated his opponent out of court," whispered one of the Justices of the Supreme Court to another, on the occasion of Benjamin's opening statement in his first case before that august tribunal; and if, as Curry says, "he seemed to have no special aptitude," it can hardly be doubted that one of the greatest, if not the greatest, of his intellectual gifts,—illustrated alike in his speeches and his writings,—was this unique power of exact and lucid statement.

Among the noted or famous preachers of America, Curry himself a preacher and not the least known, had naturally a wide and intimate circle of friends. In addition to those already mentioned in these pages, it may not be invidious to name here Basil Manly, Philip Schaff, J. P. Boyce, J. B. Jeter, John A. Broadus, Moses D. Hoge, J. L. Burrows, W. S. Plumer and Richard Fuller. At the inauguration of Jefferson Davis, February 18, 1861, he was present, and heard Manly's prayer. His address before the World's Evangelical Alliance at New York, in 1873, was made at the request of Schaff, among others. Of Plumer and Jeter he has left the record of some pleasing reminiscences:—

On 10 November, 1868, travelling on a train between Selma and Talladega, Dr. W. S. Plumer was my companion. In course of conversation, he pronounced Andrew

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Fuller's "Gospel its Own Witness" to be the best defence of Christianity in the English language. He further said that the celebrated astronomical argument of Dr. Chalmers was more forcibly stated by Dr. Gill.

In his "Recollections of a Long Life," Dr. Jeter says the formation of an African church in Richmond, which he had in contemplation in 1842, did not receive the countenance of some Protestant pastors in the city. To a suggestion for a meeting of the clergy, to get their advice, Dr. Plumer, then pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, said: "Don't do it. The clergy may decide against your plan: but it is right; go forward in the work; and if you have trouble, I will stand by you." When an effort was being made to secure an indictment against those who had the meetings of the church in charge, the Doctor visited Dr. Jeter, and said: "I wish you to understand that in any difficulties you may have concerning the African church I am to go halves with you." It should be remembered that this noble and courageous offer was made sixty years ago.

Of Richard Fuller, he wrote in the *Religious Herald:*—

Richard Fuller would have been called an ugly man. He was gigantic in stature, with shaggy hair, coarse features, but was imperial, imposing, graceful in movement, with varying moods, the irresistible rush of a tornado, the soft sighing of a gentle zephyr—once seen in his majestic power, never forgotten. He was a rare man, a combination of contradictory qualities, and in pagan days would have been worshipped as a Hercules, or the god of eloquence. Grace subdued him, mastered him, consecrated his powers, made him a little child, submissive, affectionate, obedient at his Master's feet. Sometimes, when aroused and indignant, he thundered with the majesty and wrath of Zeus his anathemas against falsehood and hypocrisy, against cowardice and crime; and at another time he had a child on his shoulders, romping through the house or

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in the yard with the frolicsomeness of a kitten. He had a keen sense of the ludicrous, was an inimitable *raconteur*, and often charmed or convulsed an audience or circle of friends by his flashes of wit, recital of amusing incidents, or ludicrous presentations of personal characteristics.

Graduating from Harvard, he entered upon the practice of the law in Beaufort, S. C., and sprang at once to the front, with most alluring prospects of wealth, position, and fame. Dr. Daniel Baker, a Presbyterian evangelist, held a series of meetings, and Elliott (afterwards Bishop in Georgia), Fuller and others were "converted." Fuller soon entered the ministry and began his illustrious career as, perhaps, the foremost man in the American pulpit,—certainly ranking alongside of Beecher, Brooks and Broadus. He had two controversies, one with that learned prelate, Bishop England, on the tenets of the Roman Catholic Church, and the other with Dr. Wayland, of Brown University, on African slavery as it existed in the Southern States. The latter discussion, marked by great ability on both sides, was characterized as well by the lowliest spirit, and not a word was written by either which was in the slightest degree offensive or needful of apology or explanation. These men remained closest friends until death for a time separated them, and Dr. Wayland, famed for philosophy and learning, once remarked that he would cheerfully surrender whatever learning and philosophy he had acquired to be able to preach as Richard Fuller did.

"In estimating preachers," says Curry, in a newspaper article, "we must apply a different standard. Every preacher, nearly, occupies a pulpit, lifted above the people, and separated by 'a great gulf.' Humor, so effective, is eliminated, tabooed, and only such bold men as Beecher and Spurgeon broke down the barrier. Responses and inquiries from hearers, so suggestive, awakening, are not allowed. Generally the preacher is handicapped by a manuscript.

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"Whom have I heard? Their names are legion. Bersyer, Pressensé, Père Hyacinthe, in France; Cuming, Parker, Maclaren, Hall, Stanley, Farrar, Liddon, Spurgeon, in England; Stow, Park, Parker, Lorimer, Hall, Greer, MacArthur, Dixon, Brooks, Beecher, Hoyt, Jones, Burrows, Duncan, Poindexter, Hawthorne, Hoge, Palmer, Galloway, Pierce, Behrends, Stafford—well, my paper would scarcely hold the names of all. For a single sermon, Dr. T. G. Jones preached the most powerful one I ever heard, and George Pierce the most eloquent one. For cyclopean energy, compulsive appeal, absorbedness in Christ, dramatic force (on the stage he would have equalled Macready or Booth or Irving), Richard Fuller had no superior; for tender persuasiveness, Manly, Sr., had few equals; for massive intellect and exaltation of the man in man, Brooks was Saul among the Prophets. To select one and place him on the loftiest pedestal is impossible. For continuity and greatness of success, for number and wide circulation of sermons, for marvellous capacity in reaching every one in his audience, and making him feel that the sermon was especially intended for him . . . Spurgeon can have no rival.

"In some respects, in many respects, John A. Broadus was without a superior. Some preachers may, in occasional efforts, have excelled him; yet as a stated supply, to sit a whole year under one man's ministry, he would have unhesitatingly been chosen. At conventions, when others preached at the same hour, I always heard him, and never regretted it. I do not remember ever to have seen him with a manuscript, and yet he prepared carefully and minutely, not trusting to a full mind on the excitement of the occasion. He was never boisterous, never declamatory, never tore a passion into tatters. His articulation was distinct, his voice was clear, pervasive, pathetic, and he possessed such simplicity, charm, sincerity, magnetism, power, that he controlled the entire audience. An inexplicable quality he possessed beyond any one I ever heard,

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—in the same sermon he secured and held the attention of, and entertained and instructed alike, the old and the young, the cultured and the ignorant. In Dr. Jones's admirable book on 'Religion in the Army,' he tells us of the delight and the success with which Broadus preached in camps. Lee and Jackson and Gordon and Hill and Ewell and Early, officers and privates by the thousands, in sunshine, in rain, in cold, in darkness, sat or stood and listened, entranced, subdued, by the pleadings of the holy man of God."

Among the distinguished men of the Federal Congress and Cabinet, of earlier and later times, with whom Curry was on more or less intimate or friendly terms, he makes mention of Henry Winter Davis, John Sherman, Elihu Washburne, Thomas S. Bocock, William M. Evarts and Thomas F. Bayard. Of the Presidents he counted among his friends Messrs. Buchanan, Grant, Hayes, Cleveland and Roosevelt. This reminiscence of Mr. Buchanan at the White House is a striking illustration of the increased cost of living, now ruling in our social standards:—

While dining, no one was present except the President, Miss Harriet Lane and myself. He said that, being without a family, he in his public career determined to be satisfied if his estate reached one hundred thousand dollars. It amounted to that sum before he became President; and so he concluded to spend liberally his salary, which then was twenty-five thousand dollars per annum. "You know," said he, "that I entertain as much as any of my predecessors, and yet I have not exhausted what is allotted to me."

His associations with many of the generals of the Confederacy during the progress of the War between

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the States, and in the years following its close, have been heretofore mentioned or detailed in these pages. Among these, there was none whom he more admired than General Joseph E. Johnston.

"Gen. Johnston," he writes in his diary, under date of August 28, 1877, "told me that he and Gen. Lee were classmates at West Point, and quite intimate; his father having been an adjutant to Gen. Lee's father in the Revolution, the friendship was hereditary,

. . . "Generals Jubal Early and Joe Hooker were at the Military Academy at the same time. In the debating society an altercation occurred between them, and Early walked across the room and kicked Hooker. Hooker did not resent, and Southern students 'cut' him as a coward. In the Florida War Hooker was so coolly brave as to win admiration and friendship. In the Mexican War he won the appellation of 'Fighting Joe'; and in our Civil War he retained the distinction."

On September 8 of the same year, while at the White Sulphur Springs, Curry wrote in his diary:—

In a conversation with General J. E. Johnston, he said that just after his surrender to General Sherman, when they were alone, General Sherman showed him a telegram announcing the assassination of Lincoln, remarking that he had withheld it from his officers, lest they might, contrary to his own opinion, hold Confederates responsible for the crime, and be exasperated against them. He was debating in his mind how to communicate the intelligence, and prevent the inference. In Sherman's book, it appears that the information was given in general order that night, the complicity of Confederates asserted.

Sherman's account of his (J.'s) behavior at the surrender is purely fictitious.

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On March 24, 1891, Curry was an honorary pall-bearer at General Johnston's funeral. Under that date the Washington *Post* published an interview with him about Johnston, of which the following is an extract:—

He was a very reticent man, and talked but little about the affairs of his army on any occasion. He was the most enthusiastic and scientific soldier I ever knew. Often at night, when we were riding along on that memorable retreat, he would talk to me for hours about the famous campaigns of Wellington or Marlborough, for whom he seemed to have an especial admiration; and, of course, of the great campaigns of Napoleon. He was as familiar with all those great military campaigns as I with my a b c's. He was a thorough and indefatigable student of military affairs. He was a close reader of Napier's works, and of the dispatches of Napoleon and Wellington, devouring them as a student would a work on mathematics before an examination. Military works and problems were meat and drink to him. Though, while I was attached to his staff, we were constantly falling back before Gen. Sherman's army, Gen. Johnston was never surprised. He seemed always to know what the enemy was going to do before it was done. He made his cavalry, as he said cavalry should be, the eyes and ears of an army. In consequence his officers were able to report to him constantly the enemy's movements. I once saw the General in a towering rage, and only once. . . . Gen. Sherman always had the highest regard for Johnston's military ability. He could never hazard anything with Johnston. Johnston was firm, abrupt in his manner of speaking, and thoroughly self-reliant; yet he was kind-hearted, a true friend, and very sympathetic.

Col. Harvie, of Johnston's staff, says the General was the first military man this country has produced. Lee was the greatest man, Johnston was the greatest soldier.

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Between the covers of the little diaries, and scattered through the numerous notes and newspaper clippings which Curry preserved, may be found many other stories, incidents and reminiscences concerning acquaintances and friends of his, whose names are destined to illustrate the pages of contemporary history.

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CHAPTER XXI

EDUCATIONAL THEORIES

If Curry may not be reckoned a great educational theorist in the broadest and most original sense, his writings and speeches on education quite clearly show that in the course of his experience he had worked out and developed a coherent and consistent scheme, which proved, in its application to the peculiar conditions of the time, to be of excellent practical value. This scheme, clearly formulated about certain fundamental propositions, is illustrated not only in the essays on educational theory that are contained in the pages of his Reports to the Peabody Board, but appears perhaps most luminous in the various speeches and addresses made by him to legislative bodies, upon whom he was seeking to impress his theories to the end of obtaining their practical application. Yet no one of these addresses contains the whole of his educational ideal, which is obtainable only by segregating and co-ordinating the cardinal principles upon which the entire scheme rests.

A primary proposition of his general theory is that education and ethics are inseparable, and that the development of the ethics which should accompany education ought not to stop short of Christianity itself. He was a protagonist for school and church as nearly one as they might be made; and it was his

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custom, in theory and practice, to walk from the doorway of one into the doorway of the other.

"What of the night?" he said at Louisville, Kentucky, in 1883. "I can only answer: Do what lies nearest in the light of duty and conscience and the Scriptures, and leave results to God. If any safe solution there is, it must be in the school-house and church house, in education and in the gospel of Jesus Christ, bearing in mind the object of education is not so much the imparting of knowledge as the developing of powers and the building up of inward strength of character. Education is no Catholicon, any more than freedom is; it does not cure social and political ills. It must be supplemented by and allied to the uplifting, renovating, regenerating power of the Christian religion."

In his contemplation of the significance of education, the development of the most highly cultivated intellect, untouched and undirected by such a code of ethical conduct as is indicated in the Sermon on the Mount, might for him never be "a panacea for human ills." "Head, hand and heart should be in partnership," he declared, with insistent emphasis.

A second fundamental of Curry's educational scheme was that public education is a perpetual public duty. If, as he said at Louisville, education "does not cure social and political ills," yet without it the social statics that Herbert Spencer defines as being "the conditions essential to human happiness" may not continue to exist; and in his ultimate judgment the duty which man owes the State in the matter of education falls far short of what the State owes man. "It is the right of the unborn to be granted an intelligent and refined parentage."

It is the prime business and duty of each generation to educate the next. No legislation in the United States is

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more important than that which pertains to the universal education of our citizens. . . . The basis of free institutions is the intelligence and integrity of the citizen. . . . In a popular government an educated people is the best constitution. . . . Universal education, even approximately, is impossible except through governmental direction and public revenues. . . . Primarily it is the duty of local communities and of States, by local and general taxation, to furnish education for all youth. The education of the children of a State is properly a burden on property and is the cheapest defence of the property and the lives of citizens.

"The duty of parents and churches must not be ignored and underestimated," he told the Georgia legislature in December, 1888; "but the whole history of the human race shows their insufficiency. . . . Without State system and support, general education is impossible. Parental and individual and church efforts have never approximated the needs of the young. The common claim of the exclusive right of parents to train their children is based on a false assumption of sole ownership. Children belong to community and State as well as to father and mother. Society is intensely interested in the well-being, the proper instruction of youth."

He preached this doctrine of the State's duty to childhood in every Commonwealth that the Peabody Fund included in its scope, and with such effect as to fasten the modern public education theory upon the minds of legislators as a commonplace of thought. It was his supreme message and he drove it home with unwearied energy and infinite variety.

The patriotism, intelligence and virtue of the individual citizen is the foundation upon which rests free representative government. The education and proper training of the voters who must choose the public officers to carry on

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the State's affairs is therefore a sacred duty, which cannot be neglected without injury to the State and to society. Ignorance is no remedy for anything.

This was the message that he bore to the lawmakers of South Carolina in 1890; and in the same year he insisted to the legislature of Louisiana that "Universal education is an imperative duty."

While thus proclaiming the duty of government to provide instruction for the whole body of its citizenship, he did not fail to maintain that this provision should be under the sole control of the State or of some local or municipal authority. He never lost sight for a moment, in his most ardent advocacy of universal education, of that profound basis of political and economic philosophy, upon which the whole superstructure of his thought and conduct was reared. He carried the apparently complex, and yet ever simple, doctrine of constitutional "strict interpretation" not only into his life as a statesman, but as undividedly into his life as an educator.

"In our system of co-equal and correlated States, a national system of education is undesirable, as is a national University," he declared in 1883; "and the subordination of State school systems to Federal direction and control is contrary to the genius of our institutions. The separate States are not to be absorbed, nor sunk into provincial dependencies. We seek the harmonious blending of the centrifugal and centripetal, liberty and union, local self-government and a Federal government, all preserved in strength and orderly unity.

"National aid to State schools will secure the benefits of a national education."

It was upon this philosophic survey of the educational forces, blending into the harmony that springs

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from the inviolate "genius of our institutions," that he established his support, with constant pen and ready tongue, of the Blair Bill.

He desired the Federal aid for a cause which he saw sorely needed pecuniary help; but he did not anticipate, as other State Rights leaders of the period anticipated and feared, that the grant of Federal aid would prove the prelude to the compulsion of Federal control.

With all his eagerness to obtain the enlarged facilities which he expected from the Blair Bill, he valued beyond any Federal aid to education in the South the financial assistance which State after State, under his influence and that of his coadjutors, learned at last to give out of its own strength and of its poverty, and with a generosity hardly equalled in the history of public education throughout the world. Writing to Mr. Winthrop, under date of September 27, 1894, about the Peabody Normal College at Nashville, he says:—

> Useful as is the College, marvelous as has been its success under its very able President, it is not a substitute for our State Normals, and can never do the work of those indispensable local institutions.

The vision of a complete State school system was clear to his mind.

The material value of education was another factor in Curry's general plan, which he properly considered might be appropriately emphasized to a people just emerging from the poverty wrought by war and reconstruction. That education was an asset of estimable value in the life of the individual, the State and the Republic did not, however, obscure

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his recognition of the fact that the utilitarian advantage to be derived from it was only one of many advantages.

"Industrial success, productive industry, accumulation of capital, remunerative wages, national independence, national well-being, cannot be separated from general education," he said in his Louisville address, above mentioned; and, in 1885, in a speech before the legislature of Alabama, he re-asserted the proposition in another form:—

> Education is the fundamental basis of general and permanent prosperity. Poverty is the inevitable result of ignorance. Capital follows the school-house.

In an address delivered in 1888 to the legislature of Georgia, he made application of the economic principle as one equally conducive to the development of good citizenship, and of patriotism itself.

> The lowest considerations of self-interest demand the competent support of universal education. Free government is the outcome of diffused intelligence and broad patriotism. An ignorant rabble is food for riots and the tool of demagogues.

This proposition, which he dwelt upon wherever and whenever he spoke to the law-making bodies that controlled the purse-strings of the public revenues, was nowhere put by him more forcibly or with finer effect than in a speech to the legislature of Alabama, on December 2, 1896.

"Looked at economically," he said on that occasion, "it is not difficult to demonstrate the money value of education to individuals and society; and in the very lowest utilitarian view which you can take, education is convertible into lands and houses and taxable property. Intelligence

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is a great money-maker, and it does not make it either by extortion or fraud or corruption. It is a money-maker, because it creates products cheaper and better than ignorance ever did or ever can. Brute force spends itself always unproductively. The highest principles of political economy and of social well-being demand the universal education of children and the prevention of non-producers among men. . . . The true mint of wealth is not at Philadelphia nor San Francisco, but is in the schoolhouse."

As a subsidiary part of his larger plan, his general scheme included the value of manual training to the developing child; and, in elucidating this branch of his theory, he drew a significant and notable distinction between this "manual training" and the peculiar "industrial training" which has come to be used with distinguished effect and marked advantage in the education at Hampton and Tuskegee of Indians and negroes.

"Industrial training," said Curry in a speech before the Virginia legislature in the winter of 1891–1892, "is to give special training in the mechanic arts, to teach shoe-making, carpentering, blacksmithing, as a trade. Manual training, as the term is limited, is to give a general training, a dexterity, to the hands, so that they may readily acquire skill in any of the mechanic arts. This is an effectual educational process, bringing hand, eye and brain to work together, developing harmoniously all the powers of a human being."

"The most interesting and profitable changes that have been made in the ends of modern education," he told the legislature of Georgia, a year or more later, "is the incorporation of manual training in the curriculum, so as to bring education into contact with the pursuits of every day."

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As may be inferred from the perusal of earlier pages of this book, the normal school stands out boldly in Curry's panorama of public education. If any one man may be so singled out and honored, Curry, by his intense devotion to the idea of scientific teacher-training, his personal interest in the newly born State normal schools, and his faith in their future, deserves the title of the "father of the Normal Schools in the South." It is difficult to imagine the growth of such powerful foundations as the normal colleges at Farmville, Greensboro, Rock Hill, Natchitoches, without his fostering care and quickening influence. And his conception of the College at Nashville as a great central station of teaching efficiency and power was an act of pure educational inspiration ranking with the visions that have given immortality to the great educational reformers.

The imperative and ever unsatisfied need of trained teachers is indicated in the organization and conduct of all successful public school systems; and the need of the product illustrates the necessity of what shall create that product. Public schools, without normal schools and colleges to supply them with trained teachers, would be as antiquated in the modern view of education, as ocean liners without steam.

"Teaching is a science, with methods and principles and laws," he said at Blacksburg, Virginia, in 1882. "To direct intellectual action, we must understand intellectual action,—the true nature and functions and capabilities and order of development of the mind we are seeking to educate or instruct. Teaching is based on psychology. Pedagogy is psychology applied to teaching. . . . As a

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necessary part of our public school system, we need normal schools for training teachers,—not annexes, attachments, but separate and distinct schools.

"As essential to a public school system, and to the claim of the State to educate, are normal schools to fit teachers for their work."

Other sayings of his, on public occasions, and especially in the uncertain field of legislation, where his most important work was often done, illustrate his views of training teachers, and of the need of good teachers in the schools. He said in a circular, addressed to State Superintendents of Education throughout the territory lying within the jurisdiction of his duties as Peabody Agent:—

While practical results are aimed at, it would be unfortunate should the instruction degenerate into a series of drills. Intelligence is the basis of all skill; and appreciation of the psychological reasons for the preference given to any particular method is regarded as essential to good teachers.

So significant did he deem the education of the teacher who was to educate the child, that he was insistent upon having rigid investigation into the qualifications of the teacher, before he should be allowed to come into didactic contact with the mind of the child.

"License to teach," he said to the Virginia legislature in February, 1892, "should be given only to those who have passed satisfactory examinations in the branches to be taught, in the principles, and in the best methods of teaching;" and he added with a profound insight that epitomized in its expression the whole philosophy of school-education: "The teacher is the school."

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It was a saying worthy of Arnold of Rugby, or of any of the great pedagogues, who have illustrated in their own lives and careers, as instructors of youth, its essential verity.

Perhaps of all the marks which,—as the hatchet-cuts in trees, through a theretofore untraversed forest, point the course of the pioneer,—blazon the pathway of this adventurer through a region where, to many, his propaganda was scarcely less startling than had been the results of war itself, none seemed more daring, or to this day remains so stoutly doubted by many, as his long cherished theory of the co-education of the sexes. The proposition, when first broached in its less aggressive form of an equal opportunity of education to women, failed to commend itself to the favorable consideration of a society which hardly believed that women needed such education as is fit for men,—the education that enables its possessor to fight the battles of life. And while this doctrine of Curry's, which grew with him finally into a dogma that admitted of no contravention, came at length to find acceptance with legislators, if not with the whole social organism, the co-education theory is yet weighed in the balances of uncertainty and question by the influences that dominate the field of his endeavor.

"Girls ought to have equal advantages with boys for higher education," he shouted to his audience at Blacksburg, in 1882, with a brusqueness and a directness that knew no beating around the bush; and nine years later he preached the same gospel to the legislature of North Carolina.

"Faint murmurs of dissent," he said in Raleigh, in 1891, "are occasionally whispered against the equal education,

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but the voice of public justice is beginning to demand that those who are to be wives and mothers shall not be treated with persevering and shameful injustice."

The philosophy of Plato, propounding the majestic question, "Is there anything better in a State than that both women and men be rendered the very best?" and answering it with assured affirmation: "There is not," points no way, of itself, how this one best thing is to be accomplished. But to Curry's earnest thought and single mind the road was straight and narrow, and its sign-post was "Co-education."

"What has been done for higher education of young women in the United States has not accorded with the boasted respect and deference rendered to the sex, nor with what has been so liberally done for young men," he said with a fine scorn, in an address before the Winthrop Training School on May 12, 1889. "Very few institutions for taking young women through advanced courses of study have been endowed and supported by States; but," he adds, and there is a visible note of triumph in the words, "Co-education is fortunately finding increased adoption in colleges and universities."

As Curry's phrase, in his letter to his son, previously quoted in these pages, and prefixed to the volume itself as a sort of text, that men should "live in the present and for the future, leaving the dead past to take care of itself," expressed his most intimate spiritual attitude toward life, so he expressed his most intimate social and political attitude toward education, as an agent for human betterment in the saying:—

The public free schools are the colleges of the people; they are the nurseries of freedom; their establishment and

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efficiency are the paramount duty of a republic. The education of children is the most legitimate object of taxation.

His mind dwelt on education in its social and political aspects. He was an educational statesman rather than a scientific expert in pedagogy. His great aim was to fasten the principle of popular education upon the minds of the people, and to interweave it into the structure of the State, leaving to later generations the working out of the principle itself in larger scientific detail. He belongs rather with the Martin Luthers, the Miltons, the Jeffersons, the Matthew Arnolds, and the Horace Manns of the world's educational battle, than with the Sturms, the Pestalozzis, the Rousseaus, the Fröbels, the Herbarts of the unending struggle. His papers and speeches do not compare with Horace Mann's in scientific thoroughness and pedagogic value. They did not need to have these qualities. He stood on Mann's shoulders and faced another sort of social situation; but not Mann himself equalled the intensity, the hard common sense, the unflagging passion with which he lodged his truths in the minds of men. He was not a curriculum maker, but a social propagandist. Yet it is interesting to see how even the details of the great process attracted him; and how his mind played with the psychological side of the problem; and no less interesting to observe how acutely his thought took hold upon the technique of educational processes, and reached out after the truth about the needs of communities in primary, industrial and agricultural instruction. The whole wide field opened itself to him; and he had firm hold of the unity of education, and perceived all of the elements of educational work in one comprehensive

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aggregate, conducing to strengthen and advance the life of man.

From the substance of his unnumbered utterances on behalf of what Mr. Winthrop called "The Great Cause," might be constructed and developed, what Curry himself was always too busy to construct and develop, had he cared to do so, a concrete total system of educational plan and scheme, at once as synthetic and as reasonable, though never so original, as Herbert Spencer's elaborate system of philosophy. But such a scheme, so wrought out, would show little that was essentially new. It is in the patience and persistence and power of adaptation with which he applied old theories and practices to new problems, under adventitious circumstances, that his ability as a constructive educator may be said to have lain. Over and over and over again he repeated his propositions, kindled with his hopes and aspirations, and warmed with his eloquence; until the dull ear of his audience awoke to listening, and he entered at last into its brain and heart. The State's duty toward public education; its moral and ethical significance, not only for culture but for the progress demanded by modern life; the material value of education; the relative attitudes of State and Nation, under our political organization, toward public instruction; manual training; industrial training; normal schools and trained teachers; equal opportunity of education for the sexes; co-education in colleges and higher institutions of learning—the absolute necessity for the wise training of a backward race of different ethnic type, set down in our society, in order to protect that society from deterioration and inefficiency,—these were his constant and never-forgotten themes.

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He felt kindly toward the negro, but his largest thought was for the integrity of our whole life. It was these theories upon which he addressed hearkening legislatures, and with which he appealed to society. Curry first appeared as a friend of negro education in the summer of 1865, when he presided over a mass-meeting in Marion which made provision for negro schools. There was practically no objection by the whites, even in the lower South, to negro education, until unwise training on the part of unworthy teachers, and a foolish idea of the use to which education was to be put by the negroes themselves, began to alarm the whites. There were true missionaries among the Northern teachers, but there were also rascals who took advantage of the negro, fleeced him of his dollars and led him to think that education meant immediate advancement to Congress or some high public office. Soon the Freedman's Bureau took a hand in the matter, and the great business of education so long directed as an individualistic enterprise by the Southern States became an affair of government, and seemed in the eyes of the blacks and whites to be a sort of "continuation of hostilities against the vanquished." The average New England teacher approached the task, however sincerely, as if the negro was simply a backward white man, an untaught "Mayflower descendant." The aptitudes, capabilities and social needs of the negro were disregarded. The Southern white teacher quickly came to avoid the work as a form of treason, because he thought the prime purpose of the whole educational scheme was to reverse all social and political conditions. True teachers of the negro race, like General Armstrong, and the great

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influences that have proceeded from Hampton Institute, like Booker Washington and a small group of thoughtful negro leaders of the past two decades, have found their hardest task in trying to undo what was done in those confused days, partly in passion and sullen pride of power, partly in ignorance, partly in haste by superficial zealots, sometimes, but rarely, let us hope, in ugly hate. Whatever the causes at work, the sad fact remains that the most difficult and delicate social and political problem of modern days was frightfully bungled, and a wedge of iron driven between the whites and blacks, making difficult for generations any sort of sympathetic co-operation in a work of racial adjustment, calling for the clearest and justest human wisdom. The highest claim of J. L. M. Curry to the rank of true statesmanship is that he never lost his head in this tangled matter, nor hardened his heart. There is but one thing to do with a human being in this world and that is to give him wise training for his day and his need. He anchored himself to this principle. He did not lose heart nor grow violent. While he did not hesitate to characterize the reconstruction educational methods "as a scheme to subject the Southern people to negro domination and to secure the States permanently for partisan ends," he saw the sane thing to do, and he pleaded for it from that summer day in the little Alabama town three months after Lee's soldiers had returned to their ploughing until his death in 1903, when common sense had begun to rule negro education, when great schools like Hampton and Tuskegee had arisen as experiment stations to propagate his ideas as well as those of their founders, and when the Southern people, with an unexcelled

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political patience, steadiness of purpose and power of will, had removed the negro from the shambles of party strife, had set him in the path he should have been placed in thirty years before, and, in a sense, had settled a question, or a phase of it, at least, more baffling than any presented for solution to the men of our race in our time.

"I shall not stultify myself by any fresh argument in favor of negro education," he declared to a legislative audience—a generation after his first speech for the negroes at Marion—"but I must be pardoned for emphasizing the fact that there is greater need for the education of the other race. The white people are to be the leaders, to take the initiative, to have the directive control in all matters pertaining to civilization and the highest interests of our beloved land. History demonstrates that the Caucasian will rule. He ought to rule. He made our Constitution; he achieved our independence; he is identified with all the true progress, all high civilization, and if true to his mission, while developing his own capabilities, he will lead out all other races as far and as fast as their good and their possibilities will justify. This white supremacy does not mean hostility to the negro, but friendship for him. On the intelligent and more refined class of the white people the negroes have been compelled to rely heretofore for the educational advantages which they possess, and on them in the future they must depend to prevent a widening of the breach between the races and to bring about their higher advancement. It is hopeless to think of the small number of educated negroes protecting themselves against wrongs unless there be men and women cultured, courageous, broad minded to correct, elevate, and lead public opinion. Some wild enthusiasts of the negro race, some purblind fanatics of the white race, may expect or desire subordination or inferiority of the white people, but that is the crazy dream of a kind of racial cosmopolitanism

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or fusion which portends loss of national unity and is the forerunner of decay.

"Much has been said—too much cannot be said—of the negro problem. It does not 'down' at any man's bidding. It is a living, ever-present, all-pervasive, apparently irremovable fact. Its solution baffles statesmanship and philanthropy. Education — moral, intellectual, industrial, civic—should be persistently, generously furnished, but, if universal, is slow in its results and while immensely beneficial does not settle irreconcilable racial antagonisms, and it leaves two heterogeneous, unassimilable peoples as coequal citizens with growing cleavage in the same territory. Preachers, sociologists, humanitarians, with their altruistic speculations, may from a safe distance poohpooh the problem, but there it is, and there it will remain.

"Recent tragic occurrences at the South are not the gravamen of the problem. They are horrifying, but are incidents. The unmentionable atrocities, filling the timid with direful apprehensions, are committed by a few brutes, who, slaves to appetites, have had their moral perceptions, if discernible at all, blunted by undeveloped intellects, low companionship, descent from depraved mothers, fiery intoxicants, and certainly are far below the average and have not the sympathy and approval of their race. It needs no argument that the more debased, the less self-reliant, the more unskilled, the more thriftless, and unemployed the race or any portion of it is, the more dangerous it will be, the less desirable as inhabitant, as laborer, as citizen, as voter. Plato said a man not sufficiently or properly trained is the most savage animal on earth. Nothing can be more illogical, more indefensible, more unjust, more cruel, more harmful to both races than to hold the negroes responsible for the outrages of a few of their race. Besides, these crimes hardly enter into the problem, which is not one of criminology or vengeance, but exceeding in magnitude and gravity any now existing in a civ-

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ilized country, and demanding the patience, wisdom, statesmanship, justice, charity of the best of the land."

The capstone to his whole scheme was his insistence upon the harmonious co-operation of all sorts and grades of schools; and its foundation was his final belief in the paramount importance of the public elementary schools.

"I am a friend of the University, my alma mater," he said to the law-makers of Georgia,—"of colleges, of the theological schools, of high schools; and I would do everything that was reasonable and right for their promotion. But if forced to the alternative of choosing between them and free schools for the masses, the colleges of the people, without the slightest doubt or hesitation I should give my voice and vote for the latter."

In this statement Curry, like Jefferson, in his famous decision for a newspaper without a government, was startling his audiences into seeing his point. He was too clear visioned not to have sight of the unity of the whole educational process, and to know that the great problem for his successors was to effect the unification of the educational forces of the State.

And so, after all is said, Curry's philosophy of education would seem to hark back at most points to that of Mr. Jefferson, whose views as to the instruction of the citizen by the State have been presented upon an earlier page. But the methods of their propaganda were necessarily different; and the earlier statesman's ideals wear the stamp of a larger originality.

Jefferson, the avatar of republican education in the South, living in an aristocratic age and in the

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environment of a society that had its political, its economic and its social basis in the dominance by the few of the many, in his efforts to educate the masses perceived with characteristic intelligence that he must necessarily elevate the citizen from the eminence of the State University. Curry, on the other hand, emerging from the wreck of that earlier society, into an atmosphere where democracy was becoming conscious of itself to the point of triumph, saw, in his turn, that the education of his day and generation must begin with the common school, and touching the people everywhere, lead them from the lower to the higher altitude.

Thus, each of these educational statesmen, conforming himself to the subtle and mysterious influence which moulds and guides the centuries, wrought out his problem after his fashion, with such success as only those encounter who work in consonance with the spirit of the age in which they live.

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CHAPTER XXII

CONCLUSION

Out of the richness and abundance of the materials which he left behind him, it has been sought in this biography to have its subject set forth himself and his career as much as possible in his own language and fashion, and in those of his friends, with such comment only as the narrative has seemed to require, and such interpellation and relation of facts as was necessary to preserve and illustrate the thread of the discourse, and fix the continuity of the story. In this wealth of quotation from diaries and records and letters are very clearly to be discovered by the reader, the character, the capacity, the ambitions, the moral fibre of the man himself, no less than the translated history of his life, his noble career and his lofty achievements. There is little need of any lengthy summing up of a case, whose incidents in consecutive significance have been detailed from the witness-stand during its progress, with such simplicity and exactness as, at once, to establish them in the mind, and to enforce conviction of their truth.

And so, because Curry has thus largely told his own story in this volume, it is not deemed necessary to seek to draw from it, when told, a moral that is obvious, or to endeavor further to adorn a tale that is of itself full of the interest which must inevitably accompany any genuine "human-document."

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His life covered a period of time in American history of such vital and violent change, of such spiritual trial and emotional strain as either to confuse hopelessly or to wreck the career of many strong men, but Curry held to a true and steady course.

In this difficult period he served his country and society as statesman, soldier, teacher, preacher, orator, diplomat and educator; and by his example illustrated perfectly the precept of the Apostle, "forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching to those things which are before."

Yet his forgetfulness was never of elementary principles, or of the significance of a tragic past. Regarding the philosophy of life as lying in the right adaptation of self to circumstances, and believing that

> "To do
> That which before us lies in daily life
> Is the prime wisdom,"

he bent all his energies to rehabilitating the waste-places of his country, and to building up a new society on the ruins of that which had been overthrown. He became an American in the broadest and most catholic sense of the term, without ever failing to remember that he was a Southerner and "an ex-Confederate"; and his loyalty to the flag of a reunited country was not tempered nor restrained by his equal loyalty to the old creeds and the old landmarks, established in the faith of the fathers.

In his diary for 1868,—the third year after the close of the War between the States, he wrote this translation from the First Book of Thucydides:—

War, least of all things, proceeds on definite principles,

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but adopts most of its contrivances from itself to suit the occasion; in the course of which, he that deals with it with good temper, is more secure; while he that engages in it with passion, makes the great failure.

He was a soldier; but he was a statesman more. In a letter written to his son from France in 1886, he said:—

A Frenchwoman asked Mary to-day, what became of our Great Army, after the War between the States. She very happily replied, in expressive phrase: "They went home." How our great Republic can exist with a handful of soldiers—about 25,000 men—is incomprehensible to Europeans. Lord Salisbury's remedy for Ireland is "a good dose of drastic coercion." His gospel is brute force, his missionaries are the police and the hangman. Gladstone's policy of justice and right as the best peace-makers, is rejected. France, Germany and Russia have each their million of men under arms. Italy, Austria and Spain must have their able-bodied men all enrolled in their armies. War, force, coercion, are the evangel.

It is a significant fact that while Curry, after the War between the States, became conspicuous among Southern public men for his Americanism, it was never at the expense of the individual. He abhorred paternalism, and strove for provision for general and public education to prepare each child of the nation for independent thinking and intelligent individual citizenship. He was not blinded by the glory of national prestige to the need of national morals; and while he invoked the Federal aid to general education because he thought the peculiar circumstances demanded such aid, his most efficient educational work was done through the instrumentalities of States, cities, and communities.

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Of his character and career as churchman and Christian, these pages are already full. He realized keenly the need of fixed religious habits in the great democracy of which he was a citizen; and he declared that "habitual attendance on public worship meets a requirement of our moral nature." One of his regrets, during his stay at Madrid, was that the various distractions of official life, as well as the uncertain provisions for protestant worship, interfered too much with his public devotions. He was an apostle of religious liberty, and he was unreservedly opposed to any union of Church and State. He did not believe in "too much machinery" in religious propaganda; and held with a simple faith to the efficacy of God's Word. On Sunday, June 3, 1877, he wrote in his journal: "Read Colenso on Romans. Rationalism in the interpretation of the Scriptures is nearly as dangerous as skepticism."

As an educator, he was conspicuously an agitator. Emerging from an antique and discarded educational status, he entered upon the career of a proselyting Peter the Hermit, preaching a veritable crusade with all the fiery vehemence and undaunted courage of the zealot. It is absolutely beyond contradiction that in this crusade he stood at first almost alone among his people; and if the days of a later generation bear witness to a wondrous change for the better, the greater therefore should be his honor and his glory.

Towards the end of his life, he wrote:—

In 1853 and 1855 I was again a representative from Talladega County (in the Alabama Legislature); and as a member of the Committee on Education sustained Judge Meek's bill, which became the first law on the statute-book establishing public schools. In the Coosa River Associa-

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tion, as a delegate to and officer of that body of Baptist Churches, I wrote reports and made speeches for education; and I may say, without vanity, that it was through my influence and persistent efforts that the Baptist Male High School in Talladega was established, organized and conducted until the War between the States closed it, as it did many other like institutions in the South.

By a singular nemesis, the large brick building passed into the hands and control of the American Missionary Association, who established that excellent institution, the Talladega College, for the training of negroes. I have seldom been more affected by environments than when, some years ago, I stood in this building and addressed faculty and students, and a mixed assembly of white and colored, some of the latter being my former slaves.

It was an episode worthy of recordation, and as significant in its token of great and irremediable change, as was that indicated in the famous figure of Macaulay's essay, in which he depicts the New Zealander of a coming era contemplating from an arch of London Bridge the ruins of St. Paul's.

To Curry's successful career as a diplomat the statesmen of his generation have borne disinterested witness. Winthrop, with that generous tact and friendliness which always seized the opportunity to say the possible kindly word, or do the possible kindly thing, wrote to him in November, 1886:—

So many things have happened of late that I hardly remember when I heard from you last. But I have heard of you from more than one source. At our Harvard Jubilee I sat between Bayard and Endicott at the table,—next but one to President Cleveland. Mr. Bayard spoke emphatically of the success of your diplomacy, and of your having just settled a delicate question. After that great day was over, and we had taken one day to rest, Mrs. Win-

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throp and I ran on to New York, and spent a few days at the Fifth Avenue Hotel. Who should be there but Wm. Wirt Henry. We talked much about you and Mrs. Curry.

Of Curry's work as an author there is no room to speak here, beyond a record of the fact that his fecundity of literary production was marvellous in the light of his other work. In the Report of the American Historical Association for 1897, Professor Thomas M. Owen gives a bibliography of the State of Alabama; and in it is a partial list of Curry's published works,—books, pamphlets, speeches, essays, and the like. Among over eight hundred and fifty authors, he stands first in the number of his productions, having to his credit eighty-two. These are classified as follows: Books, about four; pamphlets, reports, etc., about thirty-five; speeches and addresses, about twenty-seven; articles in magazines and newspapers, about sixteen. It may be added that the total number of his magazine and newspaper articles would mount up into the hundreds.

His oratory, in an age and a country of orators, was unusual and compelling. It has been described as "at once calm, intellectual, persuasive and magnetic." He had the physical presence, the distinction of manner, the quality of voice that win the attention of masses of men. In the Federal Congress he commanded and kept the attention of the House; before the legislatures of States, in his educational campaigns, he spoke with the accomplishment of results; as a pulpit-speaker and preacher he was sought by dozens of city churches; and upon the hustings he ranked with the strongest political debaters of his day.

In the social relations, Dr. Curry was a figure of

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unusual charm and graciousness. His person was erect, ample and well proportioned. His shock of black hair, whitening with the years, brushed back from a broad, low forehead, his ivory skin and clear hazel-gray eyes full of frankness and sympathy, prepossessed the eye of those who saw him upon the platform or in the drawing-room. He had the social instincts of an aristocrat, and exemplified in the best fashion the grand air of an age now gone, which greatly exalted manners and bred a quality of behavior that seems archaic and overwrought in our directer era, but which was, in reality, very beautiful and distinguished, and by its passing has somehow robbed life of something that made for the lessening of vulgarity. His demeanor, like that of so many of his contemporaries, was a wonderful mingling of dignity and condescension, of gaiety and reserve, of intense self-consciousness without a suggestion of selfishness. Life and living were for him serious, beautiful, reverential things. He esteemed himself highly and he lived rigidly up to the standard he demanded of himself. The age of chivalry had not gone for him in his attitude towards women, for he had been singularly blessed in his relations with womanhood; nor the age of romance in his feeling for childhood and youth. He loved good talk and pleasant people, a good table and the good things the flesh of man craves, including a good story. With a varied human experience enriched by wide travel there were few themes upon which he could not discourse interestingly. He could listen charmingly enough, but bore with ill-concealed impatience any lack of attention to his own speech, and distinctly did not belong to the class of talkers who make of the noble

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art of conversation a series of sallies and silences. Macaulay and Dr. Johnson were more after his heart than the polished epigrams of the great French talkers. He loved the approval of his fellows and was almost naïve in his desire for applause and in the exhilaration and increase of power the applause gave him. Though bold and courageous in his opinions, he was unhappy if he was out of sympathy with his environments, and the master craving of his heart was for adaptability to his time. He could be a little overpowering at times in his suggestion of self-confidence and easy strength, and in a certain distaste for opposition, but never to the point of offense; and behind his high bearing, and sometimes imperious ways, lurked quick tears of sympathy and swift impulses of gentleness and helpfulness to every living thing. His attitude towards the negro race was particularly fine. He was their true friend. His was perhaps the first voice to declare that there was no place for a helot in our system and that the negro must be trained properly for life in this nation. He was among the first to urge common sense in the form of industrial education as against sentimentality in the education of the negro. He denounced vehemently the proposition to divide taxes for educational purposes, on the basis of race. Personally he moved among them in his ministrations as one fancies Lee might have done, treating them in their new status exactly as he would have treated them in their old, unconscious of them socially, free of fear of them in his nerves, wanting to help them for their own sake, thinking of them kindly, but thinking more profoundly of American life as affected by their presence.

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There was no doubt in his mind of the necessity for the continued rule of intelligence and the direction of public affairs by the wisdom of the white race, but he also felt deeply that the strong must use justice always or cease to be the strong. He believed in the theory of social separateness as necessary to the integrity of the white race, and equally necessary to the development of any true racial pride or racial consciousness in the negro race.

The writer of this paragraph saw Curry for the first time, in 1883. It was his fortune as a young man in his first speech in public, to introduce the famous speaker to an audience in a thriving little Southern town. The speech, a passionate plea for education, made a lasting impression as did the man himself, in manner, presence, dress, demeanor. Men of such power did not ordinarily spend themselves in such a cause—and the cause itself suddenly loomed up in its right proportions. It was a great coincidence that such a cause found at just the right time such a man to incarnate its dignity and draw disciples to its service.

It was interesting to observe how much he enjoyed the exercise of his oratorical power, and if his audience responded there was imparted to him a mounting enthusiasm that so expressed itself in tone and gesture and manner as to move strongly any body of men. It was old-fashioned oratory to be sure, differing widely from the manner of severe clear statement into which our speaking habit is drifting with good results on the whole, but it was interesting to note how people woke up under it and felt its power and went away moved to action by reason of it. There was a singular difference between his

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written speeches and those delivered extemporaneously. In the former appear a certain stateliness, restraint and great sobriety of diction and figure. In the latter he gave himself full rein, acted the part and uttered himself in flowing and picturesque rhetoric. Like Gladstone, what he received from the audience as vapor, he returned to them as rain.

To the man himself, the very soul and heart of him, no higher tribute can be paid than that which is contained in a letter written to him in 1892, by his wife's mother, in which she said:—

> Twenty-five years to-day since you entered my family as my son,—and such a son,—one of whom I've always felt proud and thankful. Twenty-five years of love and kindness to me, during which time I've never had occasion to think or speak an unkind word or thought of you. May the Good Lord, who has followed you both with his richest blessings, continue to bless you with a long life of usefulness and continued love and prosperity, is the sincere prayer of the mother who loves you.

It was a prayer that was answered in abundance; and if man may be the judge of divine dispensation, rightly answered. For, beyond intellect, and industry, and perseverance, and adaptability, and courage, and faith, of which he possessed an unwonted share in all, stands and persists the great composite of these things, and of yet others of which it is made,—the indefinable force called character.

It was this vital force of character, that enabled him, as he did, to turn his face to the sunrise of a new day after the great sunsetting of the War, yet with an ever unfaltering loyalty to the watches of that ended night.

"Crushed, subjugated, impoverished we were by the

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War," he wrote to his son, twenty-one years after Appomattox,—"insulted, tyrannized over, outraged by Reconstruction Acts; but of what avail is it to keep alive passion, and cherish hatred? Of the abstract right of a State, in 1860, to secede, under our then form of government, I have not the shadow of a doubt. But no conquered people ever wrote the accepted history of the conquest. To go about shaking our fists and grinding our teeth at the conquerors, dragging as a heavy weight the dead corpse of the Confederacy, is stupid and daily suicidal. Let us live in the present and for the future, leaving the dead Past to take care of itself, drawing only profitable lessons from that and all history."

With this feeling of hopefulness and purpose, yet without recantation of any principle, he gave himself to the great work of his life,—the cause of Education in the South; and in his story of building up the waste-places, he set always the Peabody Fund in the forefront. Of it he once wrote, with poignant feeling and unequivocal assertion, that it had "been a most potent agency in creating and preserving a bond of peace and unity and fraternity between the North and the South. It initiated an era of good feeling; for the gift, as said by Mr. Winthrop, 'was the earliest manifestation of a spirit of reconciliation toward those from whom we had been so unhappily alienated, and against whom we of the North had been so recently arrayed in arms.' No instrumentality has been so effective in the South in promoting concord, in restoring fellowship, in cultivating a broad and generous patriotism, and apart from its direct connection with schools, it has been an unspeakable blessing in cementing the bonds of a lately dissevered Union."

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Of the man and his work the Trustees of the Peabody Fund have left a just, if glowing estimate in the memorial minute adopted at their meeting, held in the City of New York, October 8, 1903. There were present at that meeting Chief Justice Fuller, the Chairman, and Messrs. Samuel A. Green, James B. Porter, J. Pierpont Morgan, William A. Courtenay, Henderson M. Somerville, Charles E. Fenner, Daniel C. Gilman, George F. Hoar, Hoke Smith, William C. Doane and Morris K. Jesup.

The Chairman announced the recent death of Dr. Curry, the General Agent of the Board; and upon request Dr. Gilman presented a memorial paper which, on motion of Judge Fenner, was made by the Trustees an expression of their sense of the services rendered by him, and of their loss and that of the country in his death. This paper, adopted by a rising vote of the distinguished body, was as follows:—

The Trustees of the Peabody Education Fund gratefully record their appreciation of the services of Hon. J. L. M. Curry, LL.D., as General Agent of the Fund.

On the death of Dr. Barnas Sears, the wise originator of the methods adopted by this Board under Mr. Winthrop's guidance, Doctor Curry, in 1881, was unanimously appointed his successor. He had already acquired distinction as a soldier, a legislator, a minister of the Gospel, and a college-president, and his acquaintance with the leaders of public opinion and with the educational conditions of the Southern States, enabled him to enter upon the administrative responsibilities to which he was called with every assurance of success. These expectations were completely sustained. A few years later, at the suggestion of President Hayes, who was a member of the two boards,

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Doctor Curry was made the executive officer of the Slater Fund as well as of the Peabody, and in this double capacity he travelled widely and constantly in the South, visited colleges, normal schools, industrial schools, and common schools, attended educational conventions, and addressed not infrequently, and at their request, both houses of the legislature in many, if not all of the Southern States. He was also called upon in the Northern States to discuss those phases of education with which he was familiar.

Few of his contemporaries can be compared with Doctor Curry as an orator, so that it is doubtless due to him, in a large degree, that the present awakening of the South to the importance of public provision for education should be attributed. He was keenly alive to the responsibilities of his position, unwearied by the long journeys which they involved, conscious of radical differences of opinion among those whom he met, and undismayed by perplexities. His enthusiasm for education, his consideration for others, and his sincere desire to promote the welfare of all the people, enabled him to exert a profound and serviceable influence, which will never be forgotten.

Twice during his connection with this Board he was appointed by different administrations to represent the United States at the Spanish Court. With these exceptions his services were uninterrupted until a few months before his death, when his physical powers gave way. The Board provided for his relief from such duties as he was willing to throw off, yet his vigor had departed never to return. He was unable to attend the special meeting of the Board in January last, and he died near Asheville, N. C., February 12, 1903, in his seventy-eighth year. He was buried in Richmond, and at the funeral his colleagues in this Board were represented by the treasurer, Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan. Mrs. Curry, who was then a great invalid, died a few weeks later.

It is not easy to sum up in a few sentences the characteristics of this remarkable man. His versatility is shown by

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EFFIGY OF CURRY IN STATUARY HALL, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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the various positions to which he was called—the bar, the ministry, the legislature, the army, the Congress of the Confederate States, the Congress of the United States, the professorship of law, the administration of two educational trusts, the mission to Spain. It was twenty years after the outbreak of the Civil War when he entered upon his task as a promoter of peace and union by the agency of education; and during the twenty-two years that still remained to him of life, his other distinctions, if they did not vanish, were quite subordinate to that which came from his connection with this Fund. As an adviser to the Trustees, as the official visitor to the schools which were aided by the Board, as the authorized exponent and advocate of general education, as the eloquent and forcible speaker upon the public platform, he won the admiration and respect of his associates and colleagues. Other leaders will undoubtedly come forward, but the managers of this Trust will never fail to associate the names of Sears and Curry with those of Peabody and Winthrop. To these four men perpetual gratitude is due.

To justly appreciate the character of Curry, it should be remembered that he had not reached his prime when our great national drama, fate determined and fate driven, had passed from argument into war, and he, himself, caught in the grip of that same fate, with all his gentleness and tenderness, became of those whose "faith and truth on war's red touchstone rang true metal." In the strength of middle life and in the serene wisdom of old age, this fortunate man found himself living in another world, and with sufficient strength of heart, which is courage, to live in it and of it and for it, with a spirit unspoiled by hate or bitter memories, with a heart unfretted by regrets and with a purpose unshaken by any doubt. A great soul is needed to

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pass from one era to another in such fashion as this. The strand of every revolutionary epoch is lined with wrecks of pure and lovable men who had not the faith and courage to will to live and serve another time. Dr. Curry possessed this quality of courage in high degree. Indeed, for the first time he had sight of the possibility of an undivided country, rid of sectionalism and provincialism and hindering custom and tradition, conscious of its destiny, assured of its nationality, striving to fit itself for the work of a great nation in civilization. He had sight, too, of his own section, idealized, to him, by fortitude and woe, adjusting itself in dignity and suffering and power to the spirit of the modern world. What is there for a strong man to do?—we may fancy himself asking himself in the silence of his soul. There could be no bickerings for such men as him, no using of his great powers to find place for himself by nursing the feeling of hatred and revenge in the breasts of proud and passionate races. There could be no crude, racial scorn, no theatrical pettiness, no vain, fatuous blindness, or puerile obstinacy. "Not painlessly had God remoulded and cast anew the nation." The pain had indeed smitten his soul, but his eyes were clear enough to see God's great hand in the movements of society and to realize the glory of new-birth out of pain, and his desire was quickly aflame to be about the work that re-creates and sets in order. Like all sincere, unselfish men to whom life means helpfulness, he saw his task lying before him—like a sunlit road stretching straight before the traveler's feet. He was to walk in that path for all his remaining days. The quality of his mind, the sum of his gifts

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and graces, the ideals of contemporary civilization suggested political preferment, but no consideration of self or fortune could swerve him from his course. There dwelt in him a leonine quality of combat and struggle, a delight of contest, a rising of all his powers to opposition that had only one master in his soul, and that master was the Christian instinct for service. He was once heard to declare to a great audience that it was the proudest duty of the South to accomplish the education of every child in its borders—high or low, bond or free, black or white. The only response to his appeal was silence. He shouted, "I will make you applaud that sentiment." With strident voice and shaking of the head, after the manner of the oratory of the olden time, he pleaded for human freedom. He pictured to his audience the ruin that may be wrought by hate, and the beauty of justice and sympathy until he awakened in them the god of justice and gentleness that lies sleeping in the human heart, and the applause rolled up to him in a storm.

Over at Lexington, by the quiet flowing river, and the simple hills, Robert E. Lee saw the same vision, because there dwelt in him, too, the same simplicity, sincerity and unselfishness. The philosophic student of our national story will one day appraise and relate how much it meant to that story that the vision of Lee was not disturbed nor distorted by dreams or fancies that in all ages have beset the brain of the hero of the people. This quiet man at Lexington had led mighty armies to victory, and had looked defeat and ruin in the face with epic fortitude. He had stood the supreme figure amid the fierce joys and shoutings of a mighty day. His name rang

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around the world foremost in the fellowship of the heroes of the English race; but the vision that appeared to Lee, the conqueror and warrior, was the same that appeared to Curry, the scholar and student and orator. It was a vision of many millions of childhood standing impoverished and untaught amid new duties, new occasions, new needs, new worlds of endeavor, appealing with outstretched hands to the grown-up strength of their generation, to know why they should not have a country to love, an age to serve, a work to do, and a training for that work. Alien to this new generation were the subtleties of divided sovereignty, or the responsibility for the presence of the African in our life, and strange to their eyes and ears the fading fires and retreating noises of battle and of war. The vision was life—unconquered, tumultuous, beautiful, wholesome, regenerative young life—asking a chance of its elders to live worthily in its world and time. The elders had had their day, and had had acquaintance with achievement and sadness and defeat, but here stood undefeated youth, coming on as comes on a fresh wave of the sea, with sunlight in its crest, to take the place of its fellow just dashed against the shore. "Life is greater than any theory! We ask the right to live!" said this vision.

Lee and Curry saw this vision, and thousands of like souls followed their leading and found their tasks and were happy with their work lying before them and their hearts asking no other blessedness. Let all Americans be grateful to the God of nations that He had us enough in His care to choose for us such leaders as these, "whose strength was as the strength of ten, because their hearts were pure." Lee gave

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his great example and a few years of noble service to the nation, and passed, like Arthur, "while the new sun arose upon a new day." A happier fortune befell Curry. There was left to him over two decades of time in which to strive for the realization of his dreams and the fulfillment of his plans.

Our democracy, with its amazing record of achievement in the subduing of the continent, has nothing finer to show than the example of these two men in a time of great passion and headiness, save perhaps the example of another American. Away off in Massachusetts—that great commonwealth from which the nation has learned so much of order and moral persistence—a private citizen—George Peabody—was bethinking himself of his country, bleeding from the red stripes of the Civil War, and wondering what he could do to heal its wounds. It is just to hail him as the pioneer of that splendid army of "volunteer statesmen" of whom our democracy can boast, who do not hesitate to undertake any work for their country's good. It did not matter to him that the States of the South had stood to him for four years as the enemy's country. What he saw was youth, which the nation needed for its health, springing up untrained and sorely burdened—the sons of brave men, men who knew how to die for an idea, and who did not know how to compromise. What he did was to rise clearly above all small passions and to pour his great fortune into those stricken states for the benefit alike of the former master and of him who had been a slave. Lee, Peabody, Curry! We will do well never to tire of mentioning their names! An industrial democracy, threatened constantly with vulgarity and coarse strength, will have

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increasing need of the example of their noble calmness and patient idealism.

The task that confronted Curry, in its larger lines, was to democratize the point of view of an aristocratic society, to renationalize its impulses and aspirations, to preach the gospel of national unity to both sections, to stimulate the habit of community effort for public ends, to enrich the concept of civic virtue, to exemplify the ideal of social service to young men, and to set the public school, in its proper correlation to all other educational agencies, in the front of the public mind, as a chief concern of constructive statesmanship. His task, in its more technical aspects, was to reveal the public school as it should be, actually at work in a democratic society, with all of its necessities—trained and cultured teachers, varied curricula appealing to hand and eye and mind, industrial training, beautiful surroundings, nourished by public pride and strengthened by public confidence. The first ten years of his work were years of battle for the development of public opinion; and it was to be a great struggle, for many heresies were afield. He was told by those who sat in high places that public schools were godless, and that the State had no right to tax one man to educate another man's child; that it was dangerous to educate the masses, and that the educated negro or poor white meant a spoiled laborer, and many other musty things dear to the heart of the conscientious doctrinaire. His reply to all this was: "Ignorance is no remedy for anything. If the state has a right to live at all, it has a right to educate. Education is a great national investment."

And so, that solemn, majestic thing, called public

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opinion, got born, and a few men as earnest as death became somehow what we call a movement, and the movement, led by this splendid figure, wherein was blended the grace and charm of the old time with the vigor and freedom of the new, became, as has been said, a new crusade, and young scholars had their imaginations touched by it and their creative instincts awakened by it, and the preachers saw their way clear to push it along, and the politicians, ever sensitive to the lightest wind of popular desire, felt its stirrings in the air. Above it all, and energizing it all, stood this strong, gifted, earnest man, to whom was granted the ultimate felicity of beholding that supremest good of life, a creative work well done and bearing fruit.

In every one of the Southern States to-day there is a public system of schools growing yearly more complete upon which the South as a whole is expending something over forty per cent of all its public revenues. To bring this to pass, a war-stricken region has expended vast sums of money and organized education on a comprehensive and logical basis. When Curry undertook his mission in 1881 the total school revenue of the South amounted to six millions of dollars. In the year 1910 the expenditure will approximate thirty-eight millions. Normal and industrial schools for both races, sustained by general and local taxation, exist in every state. Thirty great institutions of higher learning have been revived and established. The proportion of Southern boys studying technological subjects has increased tenfold since 1873. Practically all cities and towns of three thousand population maintain a school system from which boys and girls may pass into

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college. Agriculture as a science, intensive and skilful tilling of the soil, and the elevation of rural life have become the program of practical statesmanship. And greater than all these details, a generous and triumphant public sentiment has been aroused that will make these performances seem feeble in another decade.

The chief work then of this noble life, if such a life can be thus summed up, was to develop an irresistible public opinion in a democracy for the accomplishment of permanent public ends. Through such work as his, in one generation of grim purpose and intellectual audacity, the South has lost its economic distinctness and has become a part of American life and American destiny. Men may forget the oratory, the diplomacy, the intellectual vigor, the gracious, compelling charm of Curry the man, but they will not forget the zeal, the self-surrender of Curry the social reformer and civic patriot; and when the final roll shall be called of the great sons of the South, and of the nation, who served society well when service was most needed, it may well be believed that no answer will ring out clearer and higher and sweeter in that larger air than the "*Adsum*" of J. L. M. Curry. It speaks well for the farsightedness and wisdom of the State of Alabama, for whose land and people he retained a tender loyalty, and whose citizenship he adorned, that that great commonwealth has placed in one of the niches reserved for it in the national capitol a marble statue of this son of hers containing this brief summary of his life and career,—"Educator, orator, diplomat, patriot." The fine discrimination of the act of Alabama in thus nobly perpetuating the memory of Curry lies not

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so much in the recognition of his varied general public services as in the enduring emphasis placed upon the fact that a man may be a statesman or a hero, as well by service to childhood and ideals of human training, as by subtlety in argument or bold courage in war. The fame of Curry is secure, for it is the persistent fame of the teacher and the reformer.

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SOCIETIES OF WHICH DR. CURRY WAS A MEMBER

1. Phi Sigma Society of University of Mississippi.
2. Virginia Historical Society; Member of Executive Committee.
3. Alabama Historical Society.
4. Southern Historical Association; President.
5. Southern History Association; President.
6. American History Association.
7. Virginia Baptist Historical Society.
8. Massachusetts Historical Society: Corresponding Member.
9. Southern Club of Harvard University.
10. American Society for Extension of University Training: Member of Council of Twenty.
11. Evangelical Alliance of the United States.
12. American Colonization Society.
13. Phi Beta Kappa Society of William and Mary Col-College.
14. Northwest Literary and Historical Society.
15. Curry Literary Society of Winthrop Normal and Industrial College, S. C.
16. Royal Order of Charles III: Spanish Decoration: conferred May 16, 1902.

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LEGISLATURES ADDRESSED

1881: March 8: Texas.
March 18: Tennessee.
August 5: Georgia.
1882: January 27: South Carolina.
. . . . . : West Virginia.
February 1: Mississippi.

Between Oct. 5, 1881, and Oct. 4, 1882, the Legislatures of Georgia and Texas were also addressed. — See *Proceedings* of the Peabody Fund, page 63 of Vol. III.

1883: January 19: North Carolina.
January 26: Arkansas.
February 9: Tennessee.
February 20: Florida.

Between October 4, 1882, and October 3, 1883, the Legislature of Alabama was also addressed.—See Peabody Fund *Proceedings*, Vol. III, page 123.

1884: January 10: Virginia.
January 21: Mississippi.
January 25: Kentucky.
February 4: U. S. House Committee, on Federal Aid.
February 11: Joint Committee of Virginia Legislature, in favor of a Normal School.
May 20: Louisiana.
December 3: South Carolina.
1885: January 12: North Carolina.
January 16: Arkansas.
February 3: Florida.
February 6: Alabama.
February 10: Tennessee.
1888: December 13: Georgia.
1889: January 18: South Carolina.
January 24: Arkansas.
February 1: Alabama.
1890: May 20: Louisiana.
December 9: South Carolina.

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1891: January 21: North Carolina.
1892: February 4: Virginia.
1893: February 7: Tennessee.
February 8: Arkansas.
February 10: Texas.
October 31: Georgia.
1894: January 17: Mississippi.
February 10: Virginia House Finance Committee, by request, favoring Normals.
May 16: Louisiana.
December 13: South Carolina.
1896: February 26: Mississippi.
December 2: Alabama.
1897: January 25: North Carolina.
March 5: Arkansas.
March 8: Texas.
April 29: Florida.
November 29: Georgia.
1898: January 17: Mississippi.
March 4: Alabama House and Senate Committees on Public Lands, favoring appropriations for Normals.
March 7: Ditto.
1899: November 24: Georgia House of Representatives.
1900: February 7: South Carolina.
November 22: Alabama.
November 23: Georgia.

It is not certain that the above is a full list: for the records of several years are more or less incomplete.

In the majority of cases, these addresses were made at the invitation of the legislatures, and were recognized by a vote of thanks. Several times printed copies were ordered; once or twice a copy was requested for transcription upon the minute book of the assembly.

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